

**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
U.S. COAST GUARD FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**FOR**

**PROPOSED NEW BRIDGE ACROSS THE MANATEE RIVER, MILE 15.0,  
AT PARRISH, MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**APPENDIX D**

**WETLANDS  
EVALUATION REPORT**

**JANUARY 2014**

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# *Section 1.0*

## *INTRODUCTION*

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Manatee County (the County) has prepared a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), in conjunction with the United States Coast Guard (USCG), to document a study of proposed improvements to north/south traffic movements in eastern Manatee County, Florida and to evaluate the potential impacts associated with those improvements. The objective of this transportation study is to identify the type, conceptual design, and location of improvements necessary to provide additional capacity for the projected north/south travel demand. The FEIS has been developed to satisfy the requirements of the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NEPA) and other related federal and state laws, rules, and regulations that apply to the Proposed Action.

For the purpose of the FEIS, two build alternatives are being evaluated. **Figure 1** shows the location, study areas, and construction limits of these alternatives. The study area of each alternative is defined as the area contained within a 0.5-mile buffer of the centerline. The two build alternatives are described below.

- **Fort Hamer Alternative** – This build alternative consists of a new two-lane bridge crossing the Manatee River connecting the existing two-lane Upper Manatee River Road with the existing two-lane Fort Hamer Road. The construction limits of this alternative begin just north of the main entrance of the Waterlefe subdivision and terminate on the north side of the Manatee River approximately 2,000 feet south of Mulholland Drive, a total of approximately 1.4 miles. The study area for this alternative extends south to State Road (SR) 64 and north to U.S. Highway (US) 301 because of the increased traffic between these points that would result from this alternative.
- **Rye Road Alternative** – This build alternative consists of a new two-lane crossing the Manatee River adjacent to the existing Rye Road Bridge and the expansion of Rye Road from two to four lanes from SR 64 north to Golf Course Road, Golf Course Road from two to four lanes from Rye Road to Fort Hamer Road, and Fort Hamer Road from two to four lanes from Golf Course Road to US 301, a total of 10.2 miles.

The purpose of this Wetlands Evaluation Report (WER) is to document and describe existing wetland and surface water habitats found within the study area for each build alternative and to assess the potential wetland and surface water impacts associated with each build alternative.

**FIGURE 1  
LOCATION MAP – FORT HAMER AND RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVES**



## 1.1 PROJECT NEED

Manatee County is proposing to add additional travel lanes across the Manatee River in eastern Manatee County. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to improve regional mobility by providing an alternative north/south transportation route between high-growth areas of Manatee County located east of Interstate 75 (I-75) and separated by the Manatee River. Studies have shown that there is a strong demand for multiple crossings over this waterway to alleviate the traffic burden on I-75. Several specific factors demonstrate the need for the Proposed Action, including:

- Accommodate existing and projected growth in eastern Manatee County,
- Improve the Level of Service (LOS) of the local roadway network,
- Improve emergency response times, and
- Improve evacuation capacity across the Manatee River.

The current river crossings located at I-75 and Rye Road create a circuitous route in eastern Manatee County that increases travel time/distance, reduces LOS, increases emergency response times, and are at capacity for evacuation scenarios.

## **1.2      *ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED***

The Proposed Action is intended to service the demand for two additional lanes of capacity across the Manatee River east of I-75 and the other elements of the Purpose and Need statement noted in Chapter 1 of the FEIS. East of I-75, opportunities exist where existing roadways can be connected with a new crossing (Fort Hamer Alternative) or an existing bridge and roadway can be expanded (Rye Road Alternative). Other alternatives were considered preliminarily, but were discounted due to their obvious impacts to the natural and human environment or failure to meet the project's Purpose and Need.

For example, new crossing locations between I-75 and Fort Hamer Road would require not only a new crossing of the Manatee River, but miles of new roadway traversing established and growing residential developments, thus, displacing hundreds of residents. Natural environment impacts in this area were also obviously greater than those utilizing existing transportation corridors. A crossing location between Fort Hamer Road and Rye Road had similar issues related to residential developments, but substantially greater natural environment impacts due to the curvilinear nature of this section of the Manatee River, width of the 100-year floodplain, and habitats found along the river. For these reasons, alternatives that either did not utilize or expand existing transportation corridors were considered to be unreasonable and were not carried forward in the DEIS for further analysis.

Within the Fort Hamer Alternative, three bridge concept alternatives were evaluated:

- Bascule Concept
  - Single leaf bascule (moveable) bridge with a 10-foot vertical clearance
- Mid-Level Fixed Concept
  - Fixed span bridge with a 26-foot vertical clearance
- High-Level Fixed Concept
  - Fixed span bridge with a 40-foot vertical clearance

A vessel survey was conducted during the Memorial Day weekend 1999 to determine vessel type, size, and usage along this portion of the Manatee River. At the time it was determined that a vertical clearance (air draft) of 26 feet would accommodate all vessels in this portion of the Manatee River. These results were presented to the USCG and a vertical clearance of 26 feet was found acceptable.

Due to the length of time since that survey was conducted, a second vessel survey was conducted in spring 2011. All property owners with water access between Fort Hamer Road and Rye Road were identified using the Manatee County Property Appraisers Office database and mailed a

questionnaire. Based on the response of that survey, three respondents noted they had vessels that exceeded 26 feet in height. A subsequent field review in December 2011 indicated that one of these vessels (a small sailboat) was sunk in place at the owner's dock. The second vessel consisted of a houseboat with a flagpole that exceeded 26 feet in height; however, it was noted that the houseboat required less than 26 feet vertical clearance if the flagpole was lowered. The third vessel was a sailboat with a permanently mounted mast exceeding 26 feet in height. The results of both vessel surveys are provided in Appendix A of the FEIS.

Based on the estimated total lifetime cost (construction, maintenance, and operations) of the Bascule Bridge Concept (\$106,142,880 - \$111,083,600) and the very low number of vessels needing unlimited vertical clearance, it was recommended the Bascule Bridge Concept for the Fort Hamer Alternative be eliminated for further consideration.

The bridge height is the basis for the controversy related to the Waterlefe subdivision located immediately southwest of the proposed Fort Hamer Alternative crossing. The High-Level Fixed Bridge would increase the vertical clearance to 40 feet and be contradictory to the issues raised by that community. Additionally, because of the estimated total lifetime cost (construction, maintenance, and operations) of the High-Level Fixed Bridge Concept (\$14,906,580 - \$26,016,350) and the very low number of vessels needing a 40-foot vertical clearance, it was recommended the High-Level Fixed Bridge Concept for the Fort Hamer Alternative be eliminated for further consideration.

### ***1.3 ALTERNATIVES RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER EVALUATION***

As a result of the preliminary evaluation of alternatives discussed above, it was determined that three alternatives would be considered "reasonable" for further, detailed analysis and evaluation in the DEIS:

- No-Build Alternative,
- Fort Hamer Alternative, and
- Rye Road Alternative.

The No-Build Alternative does not include any road capacity improvements other than the road safety improvements and scheduled maintenance already funded to be constructed in the Manatee County Capital Improvement Program (CIP), or improvements provided by private nongovernment entities, such as developers. For comparative purposes, the No-Build Alternative was retained and evaluated against the two build alternatives throughout the EIS process. The results of the No-Build Alternative analyses are presented in Chapter 2 of the FEIS. This WER only addresses the two build alternatives.

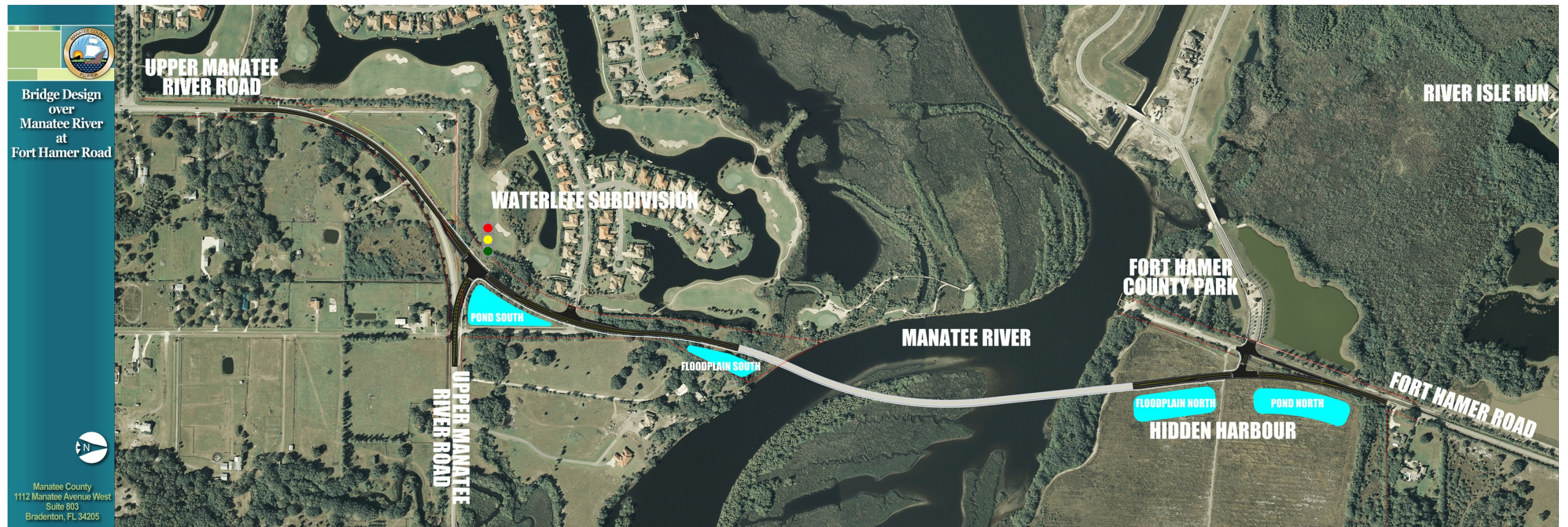
The Fort Hamer Alternative consists of a new two-lane bridge crossing the Manatee River connecting the existing two-lane Upper Manatee River Road with the existing two-lane Fort Hamer Road. The construction limits of this alternative extend from just north of the main entrance of the Waterlefe subdivision to the north side of the Manatee River, a total of approximately 1.4 miles. The length of the proposed bridge is approximately 2,570 feet. A conceptual plan view of the bridge, bridge approaches, and stormwater/floodplain features are shown on **Figure 2**. The proposed roadway and bridge typical sections for the Fort Hamer Alternative are shown in **Figure 3**.

The Rye Road Alternative consists of a new two-lane, 350-foot-long bridge crossing the Manatee River parallel to the existing Rye Road Bridge. To accommodate the two new lanes over the river, this alternative also includes the expansion of Rye Road from two to four lanes from SR 64 north to Golf Course Road, Golf Course Road from two to four lanes from Rye Road to Fort Hamer Road, and Fort Hamer Road from two to four lanes from Golf Course Road to US 301, a total of approximately 10.2 miles. Unlike the Fort Hamer Alternative, conceptual locations of the stormwater/floodplain compensation ponds have not been developed for the Rye Road Alternative since this alternative has not been advanced to preliminary designs. The proposed roadway and bridge typical sections for the Rye Road Alternative are shown in **Figure 4**.

## ***1.4      PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE***

The analysis presented in Chapter 2 of the FEIS resulted in the determination that the No-Build Alternative does not meet the stated Purpose and Need. The analysis further showed the Rye Road Alternative only minimally improves the local roadway network LOS and only minimally accommodates planned and approved growth in the area. The Rye Road Alternative does not improve emergency response times. As described in Section 3.0 of this WER, a greater area of wetlands would be impacted by construction of the new bridge for the Fort Hamer Alternative than would be impacted by the Rye Road Alternative. After consideration of each alternative's ability to meet the stated Purpose and Need and the social, cultural, natural environment, and physical impacts of the No-Build Alternative and the two build alternatives, **the Fort Hamer Alternative has been selected as the preferred alternative.**



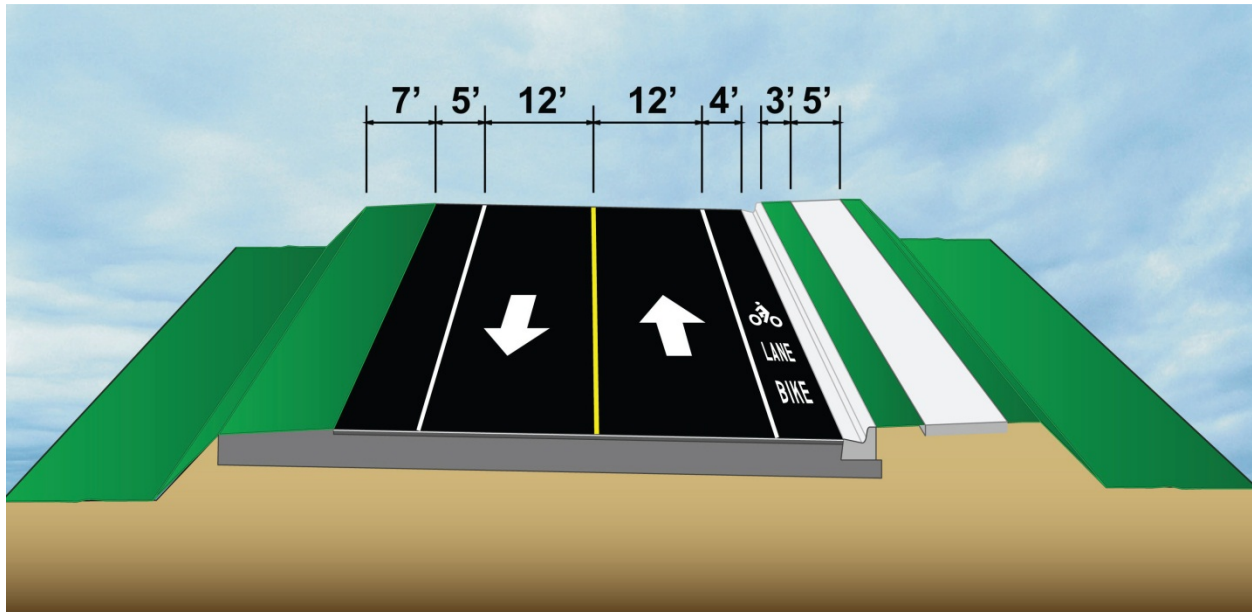


**FIGURE 2**  
**FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE**  
**CONCEPTUAL PLAN VIEW OF**  
**BRIDGE AND APPROACHES**

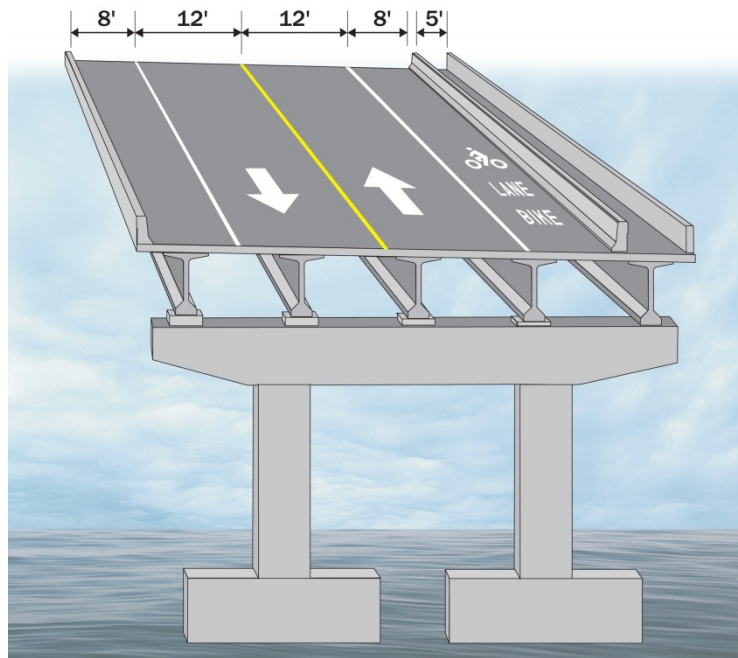


**FIGURE 3  
FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE TYPICAL SECTIONS**

**ROADWAY TYPICAL SECTION**

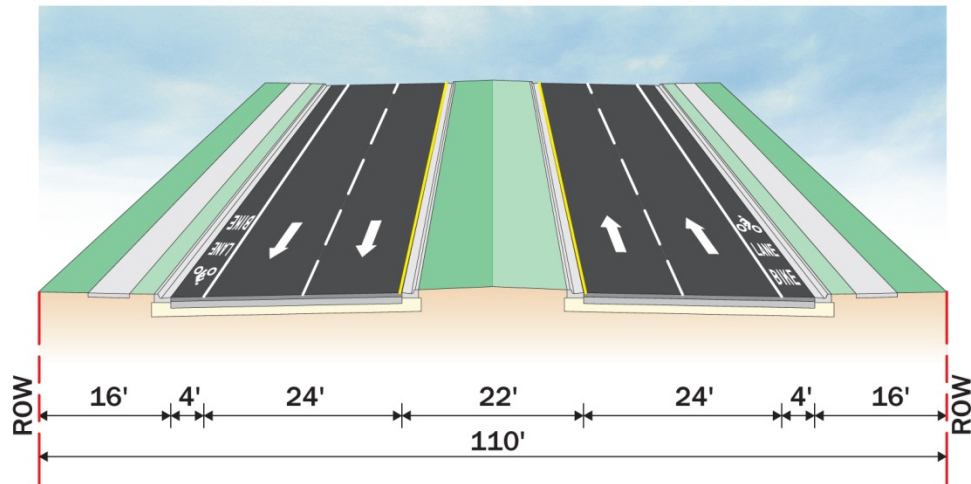


**BRIDGE TYPICAL SECTION**

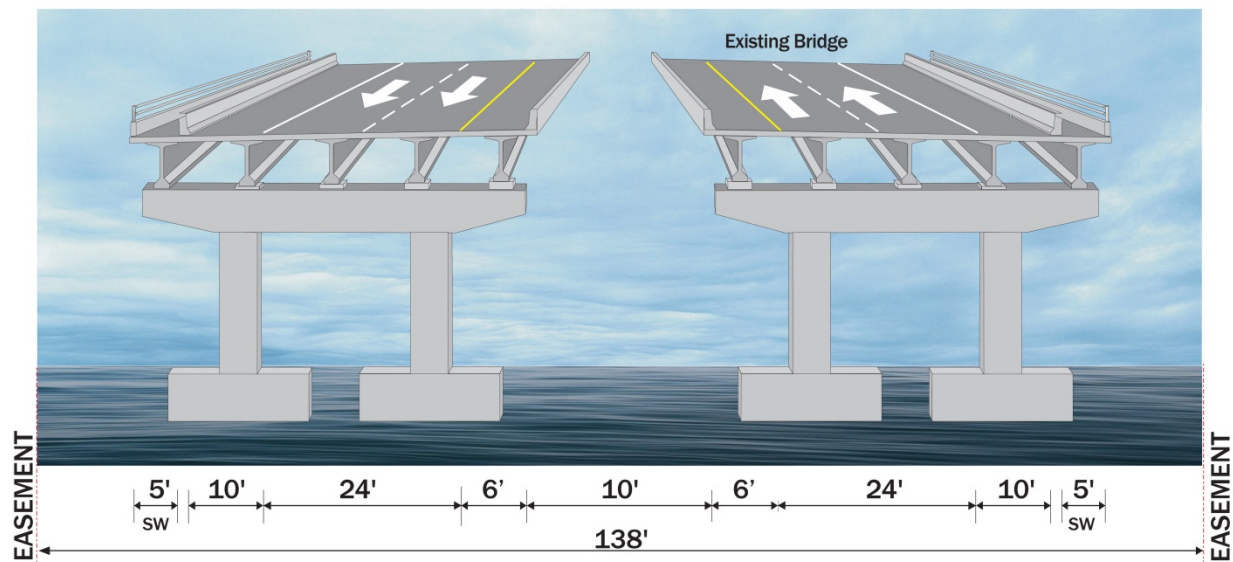


**FIGURE 4  
RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVE TYPICAL SECTIONS**

**ROADWAY TYPICAL SECTION**



**BRIDGE TYPICAL SECTION**





## ***Section 2.0***

# ***EXISTING WETLANDS***

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Pursuant to Executive Order 11990 entitled *Protection of Wetlands*, federal actions should avoid, to the extent possible, the long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands and avoid direct or indirect support of new construction in wetlands wherever there is a practicable alternative. In accordance with this order, an assessment of wetlands and other surface waters, which may be affected by one or both of the build alternatives, has been undertaken.

Wetlands are defined by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) (Federal Register, 1982) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (Federal Register, 1980) as:

*“Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bog, and similar areas.”*

This section provides a summary discussion of the surface waters, including wetlands, found within the study areas of each alternative. This section also describes the existing conditions and potential impacts related to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH).

## ***2.1 METHODOLOGY***

Prior to field visits, the following information was reviewed to characterize habitat features and land use patterns within the study area of each alternative:

- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5 minute Topographical Quadrangle Map, Parrish, FL, 1973 (Photo revised 1987) (USGS, 1987), Rye, FL (USGS, 1979), and Lorraine, FL (USGS, 2009);
- Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System (FLUCFCS) GIS Database (SWFWMD, 2009);
- Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), *Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System Handbook* 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (FDOT, 1999);
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), *Soil Survey of Manatee County, Florida* (NRCS, 2010);
- Florida Association of Professional Soil Scientists, *Hydric Soils of Florida Handbook*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (Hurt, 2007);
- High resolution orthorectified color aerial imagery (FDOT, 2011); and

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States* (Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979).

In April and May 2010, environmental scientists familiar with Florida natural communities conducted field reviews of the study areas for each of the two build alternatives. The purpose of the reviews was to verify and refine preliminary wetland boundaries and classification codes established through literature reviews and photo-interpretation. During field reviews, the vegetative community and land use types within the study areas were visually inspected to verify approximate boundaries and dominant vegetation. Exotic plant infestations and any other disturbances, such as soil subsidence, canals, power lines, etc. were noted. Wetland and surface water boundaries noted in the field were approximated on aerials and the resulting files uploaded into a geographic information system (GIS) system for subsequent map production. Field activities also included identifying wildlife and signs of wildlife usage at each wetland and adjacent upland habitat.

All wetlands within the limits of both alternatives were classified using the FLUCFCS (FDOT, 1999; SWFWMD, 2009) and the FWS *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States* (Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979). Wetland boundaries within each alternative were approximated using Chapter 62-340, F.A.C., *Delineation of the Landward Extent of Wetlands and Surface Waters*, and the criteria found within the USACE (2010) *Regional Supplement to the USACE Wetlands Delineation Manual: Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain Region* (Version 2.0) (ERDC/EL TR-10-20).

Formal wetland boundary delineations and surveys would be conducted as part of the state and federal permit application process.

## 2.2 SOILS

### 2.2.1 FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE

Based on the *Soil Survey of Manatee County, Florida* (NRCS, 2010) 16 soil types are reported within the Fort Hamer Alternative Study Area (see **Figures A1 through A5** in **Appendix A**). **Table 1** provides the approximate acreage of each soil type in the Fort Hamer Alternative Study Area.

**TABLE 1**  
**EXISTING SOIL TYPES WITHIN THE FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE STUDY AREA**

Soil Type	Area (acres)	Percent of Study Area
4 – Bradenton fine sand	33.30	0.8
6 – Broward variant fine sand	7.08	0.2
7 – Canova, Anclote, and Okeelanta soils	227.65	5.2
11 – Cassia fine sand	145.65	3.4
13 – Chobee loamy fine sand	5.37	0.1
16 – Delray complex	64.71	1.5
17 – Delray-EauGallie Complex	16.49	0.4
20 – EauGallie fine sand	2,717.45	62.5
24 – Felda-Wabasso association, frequently flooded	77.37	1.8

*Continued on next page*

**TABLE 1 (CONTINUED)**  
**EXISTING SOIL TYPES WITHIN THE FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE STUDY AREA**

Soil Type	Area (acres)	Percent of Study Area
25 – Floridana fine sand	65.56	1.5
26 – Floridana-Immokalee-Okeelanta association	207.10	4.8
34 – Okeelanta muck, tidal	189.98	4.4
36 – Orlando fine sand, moderately wet	90.72	2.1
38 – Palmetto sand	70.73	1.6
39 – Parkwood variant complex	19.04	0.4
48 – Wabasso fine sand	295.15	6.8
99 – Water	113.91	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,347.24</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding

## 2.2.2 ***SOILS WITHIN THE RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVE***

Based on the *Soil Survey of Manatee County, Florida* (NRCS, 2010), 28 soil types are reported within the Rye Road Alternative Study Area (see **Figures B1 through B8** in **Appendix B**). **Table 2** provides the approximate acreage of each soil type in the Rye Road Alternative Study Area.

**TABLE 2**  
**EXISTING SOIL TYPES WITHIN THE RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVE STUDY AREA**

Soil Type	Area (acres)	Percent of Study Area
3 – Braden fine sand	45.99	0.6
4 – Bradenton fine sand	15.68	0.2
7 – Canova, Anclote, and Okeelanta soils	371.73	5.0
10 – Canaveral sand, organic substratum	0.60	0.0
11 – Cassia fine sand	286.10	3.8
12 – Cassia fine sand, moderately well drained	56.38	0.8
13 – Chobee loamy fine sand	11.25	0.2
16 – Delray complex	84.14	1.1
17 – Delray-EauGallie Complex	58.92	0.8
18 – Delray-Pomona complex	5.68	0.1
19 – Duette fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes	62.73	0.8
20 – EauGallie fine sand	4,177.33	56.2
22 – Felda fine sand	15.87	0.2
23 – Felda-Palmetto complex	7.53	0.1
24 – Felda-Wabasso association, frequently flooded	307.70	4.1
25 – Floridana fine sand	176.03	2.4
26 – Floridana-Immokalee-Okeelanta association	320.92	4.3
30 – Myakka fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	567.35	7.6
35 – Ona fine sand, orstein substratum	44.57	0.6

*Continued on next page*

**TABLE 2 (CONTINUED)**  
**EXISTING SOIL TYPES WITHIN THE RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVE STUDY AREA**

<b>Soil Type</b>	<b>Area (acres)</b>	<b>Percent of Study Area</b>
36 – Orlando fine sand, moderately wet	90.13	1.2
37 – Orsino fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes	12.68	0.2
38 – Palmetto sand	136.13	1.8
42 – Pomello fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	42.27	0.6
43 – St. Johns fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	0.60	0.0
44 – St. Johns-Myakka complex	74.76	1.0
45 – Tavares fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes	16.21	0.2
48 – Wabasso fine sand	394.65	5.3
54 – Zolfo fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	13.87	0.2
99 – Water	34.02	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,431.82</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding.

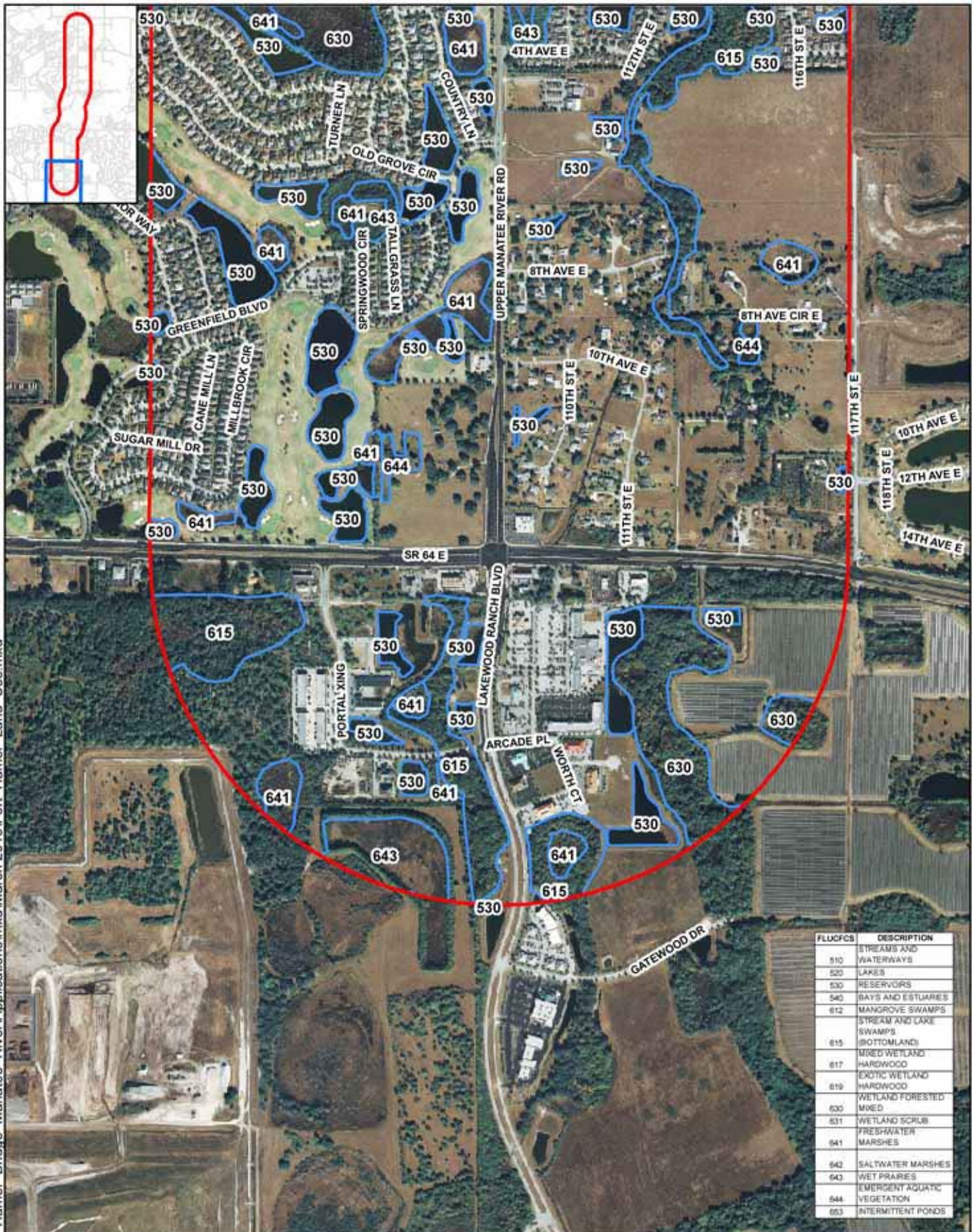
## **2.3 WETLAND AND OTHER SURFACE WATER FEATURES IN THE STUDY AREAS**

### **2.3.1 FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE**

Figures 5a through 5e show the wetland and other surface water types present within the Fort Hamer Alternative Study Area. The Fort Hamer Alternative is laterally bisected by the Manatee River, which flows east to west at this location. Within the study area, the Manatee River has a relatively slow current and is tidally influenced. The mean high water and mean low water elevations of the river at the Fort Hamer Park boat ramp at the southern terminus of Fort Hamer Road are +0.53 feet and -1.21 feet NAVD 88 (North American Vertical Datum), respectively. Large expanses of black needlerush (*Juncus roemerianus*) dominated salt marsh occur on both sides of the main channel. These marshes are interspersed with long, narrow depositional formations supporting mangroves, stream swamp, and mixed wetland forested habitats.

Within the study area, natural wetland systems north of the river include a large freshwater marsh on the west side of Fort Hamer Road and a large stream swamp east of Fort Hamer Road. The freshwater marsh is ringed by a narrow band of mixed wetland hardwoods which in turn are surrounded by residential developments and stormwater ponds. These wetlands drain south through the large freshwater marsh and eventually to the Manatee River via a small creek located along the western boundary of Fort Hamer Park. The stream swamp east of Fort Hamer Road is bordered by a residential development to the north and vacant land (former agricultural fields) to the south. This swamp drains east to Gamble Creek, a large tributary to the Manatee River.





FLUCFCS	DESCRIPTION
510	STREAMS AND WATERWAYS
520	LAKES
530	RESERVOIRS
540	BAYS AND ESTUARIES
612	MANGROVE SWAMPS
615	STREAM AND LAKE SWAMPS (BOTTOMLAND)
617	MIXED WETLAND HARDWOOD
619	EXOTIC WETLAND HARDWOOD
630	WETLAND FORESTED MIXED
631	WETLAND SCRUB
641	FRESHWATER MARSHES
642	SALTWATER MARSHES
643	WET PRAIRIES
644	EMERGENT AQUATIC VEGETATION
653	INTERMITTENT PONDS

#### Legend

- Ft Hamer Alternative Study Area
- 631 FLUCFCS Boundary and Code

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 5a  
Wetlands and Other Surface Waters  
within the Fort Hamer Alternative  
Study Area



0 500 1,000  
Feet



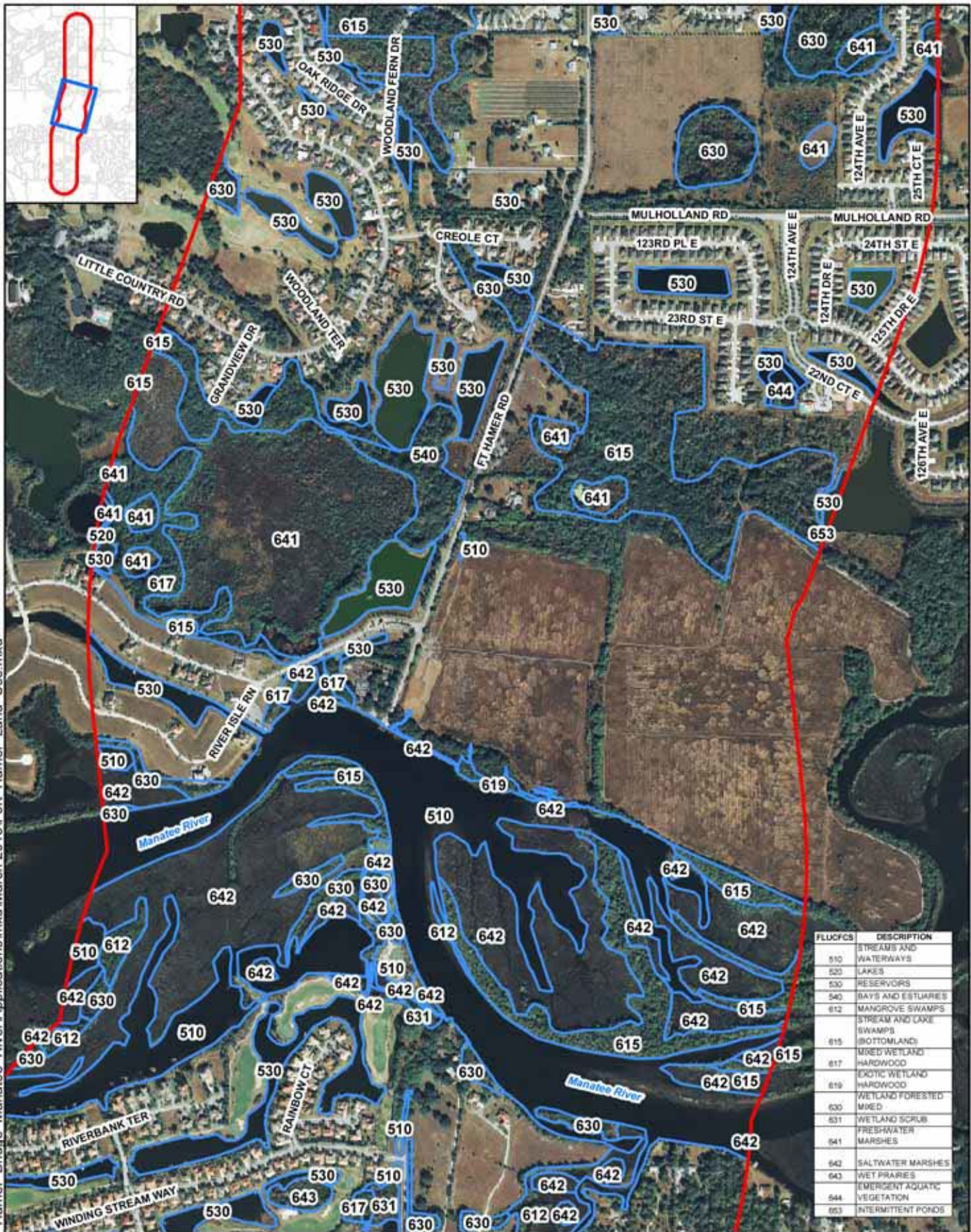


**Figure 5b**  
**Wetlands and Other Surface Waters**  
**within the Fort Hamer Alternative**  
**Study Area**



0 500 1,000  
Feet





FLUCFCS	DESCRIPTION
510	STREAMS AND WATERWAYS
520	LAKES
530	RESERVOIRS
540	BAYS AND ESTUARIES
612	MANGROVE SWAMPS
615	STREAM AND LAKE SWAMPS (BOTTOMLAND)
617	MIXED WETLAND HARDWOOD
619	EXOTIC WETLAND HARDWOOD
630	WETLAND FORESTED MIXED
631	WETLAND SCRUB
641	FRESHWATER MARSHES
642	SALTWATER MARSHES
643	WET PRAIRIES
644	EMERGENT AQUATIC VEGETATION
653	INTERMITTENT PONDS

#### Legend

- Ft Hamer Alternative Study Area
- 631 FLUCFCS Boundary and Code

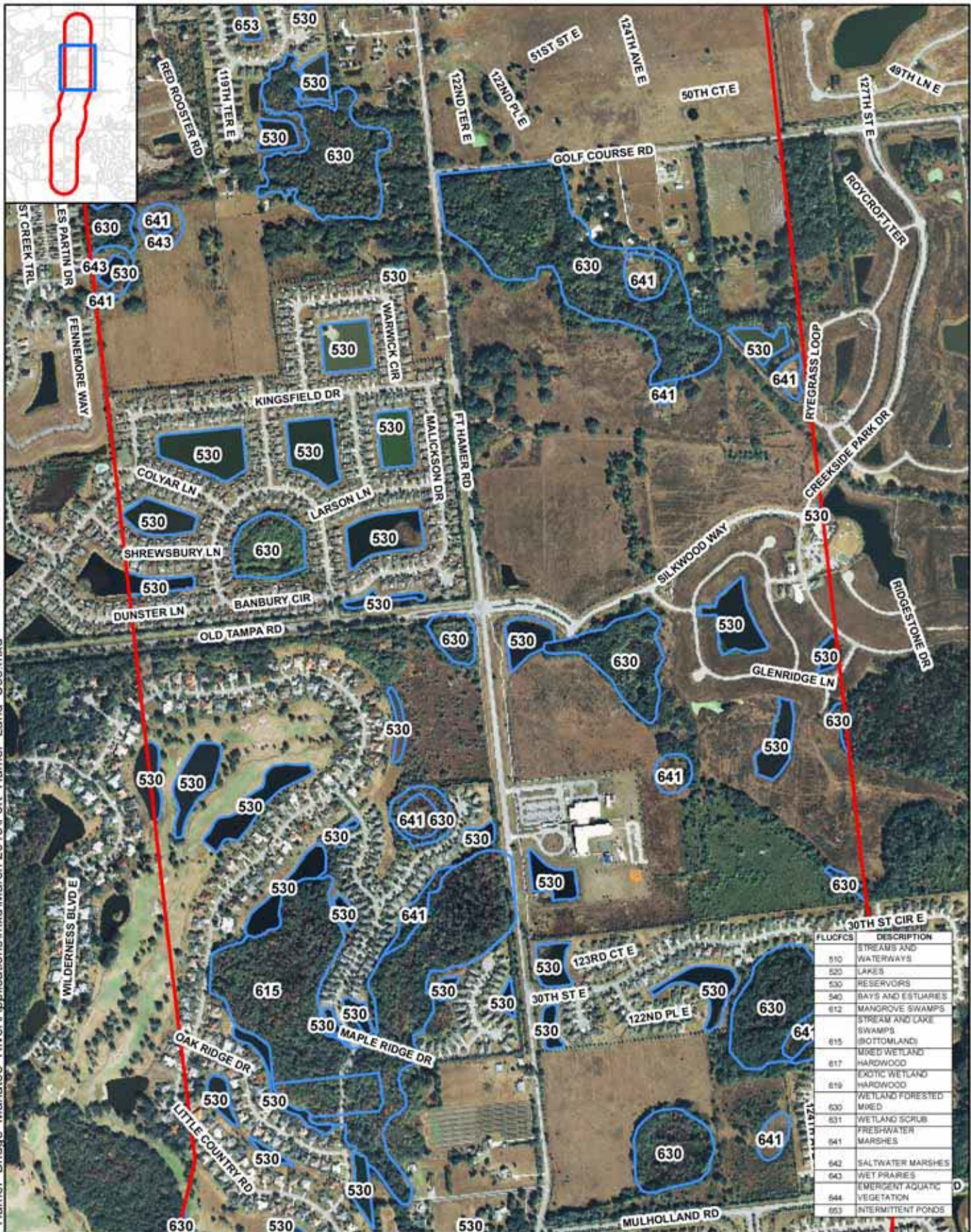
Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 5c  
Wetlands and Other Surface Waters  
within the Fort Hamer Alternative  
Study Area



0 500 1,000  
Feet





#### Legend

- Ft Hamer Alternative Study Area
- 631 FLUCFCS Boundary and Code

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 5d  
Wetlands and Other Surface Waters  
within the Fort Hamer Alternative  
Study Area



0 500 1,000  
Feet



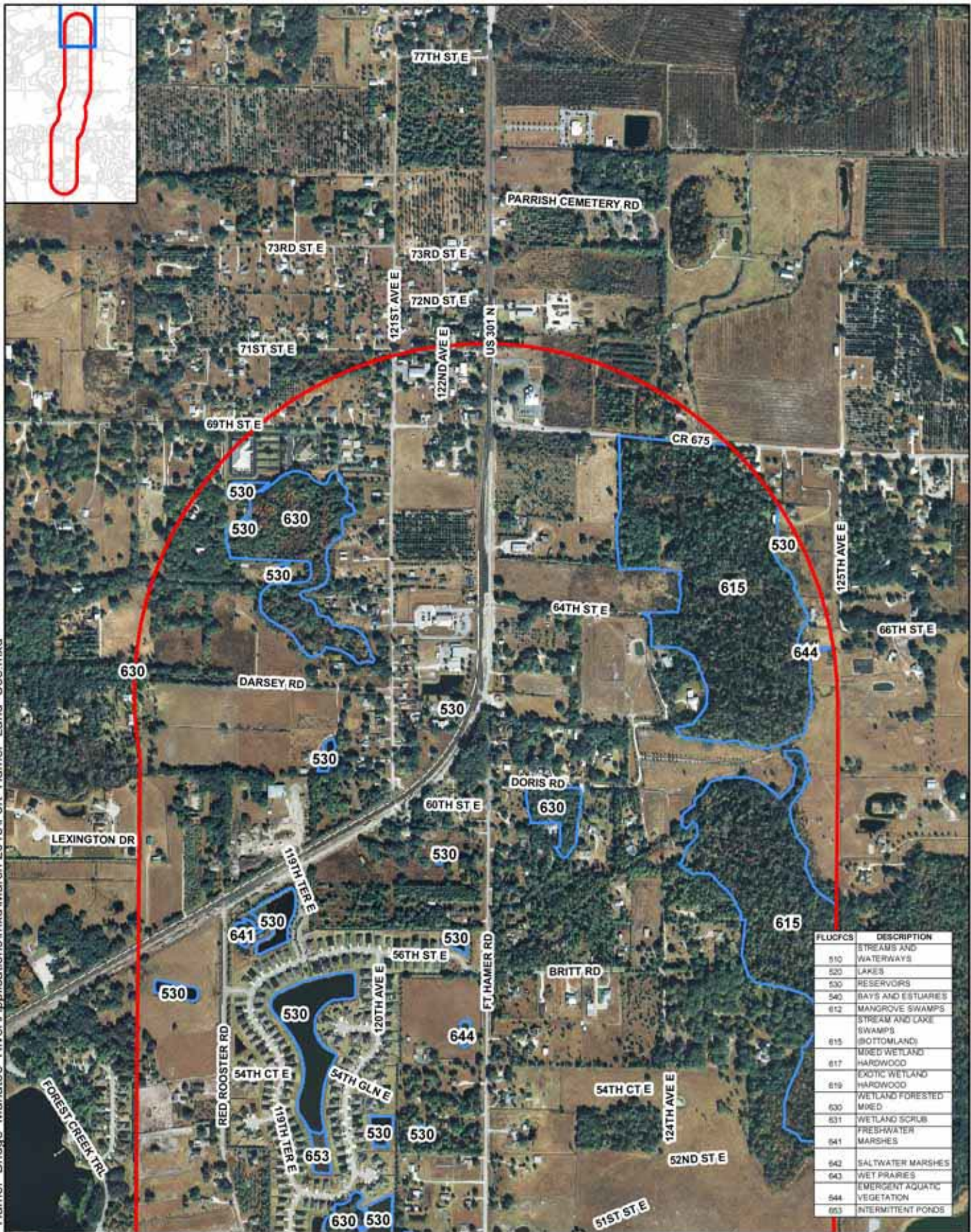


Figure 5e  
Wetlands and Other Surface Waters  
within the Fort Hamer Alternative  
Study Area



0 500 1,000  
Feet



Few natural wetland systems remain on the south side of the Manatee River within the study area. Narrow mixed forested wetlands that drain to the Manatee River are located within the Waterlefe subdivision adjacent to the river and in a low-density residential area on both sides of Upper Manatee River Road. Several other small, isolated wetlands are scattered throughout the study area south of the river. Numerous excavated stormwater ponds and golf course ponds are located throughout the western half of the study area on both sides of the river.

**Table 3** lists the wetlands and surface waters located within the study area. All wetlands and other surface waters combined account for 25.7 percent of the Fort Hamer Alternative Study Area.

**TABLE 3  
WETLANDS AND OTHER SURFACE WATERS WITHIN  
THE FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE STUDY AREA**

Surface Water Type	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>1</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>2</sup>	Description	Acres in Study Area	Total Acres	Percent of Study Area
Freshwater Lakes and Reservoirs	530	POWHx	Ponds, Reservoirs (includes stormwater ponds)	228.8		
<b>Total Freshwater Lakes and Reservoirs</b>					<b>228.8</b>	<b>5.3</b>
Drainage Ditches	510	PEM2Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditches	17.5		
<b>Total Freshwater Ditches</b>					<b>17.5</b>	<b>0.4</b>
Freshwater Wetlands	615	PFO1P	Stream and Lake Swamps (Bottomland)	272.7		
	617	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	17.0		
	619	PFO3Y	Exotic Wetland Hardwoods	1.1		
	630	PFO6/7E	Wetland Forested Mixed	176.0		
	631	PSS1C	Wetland Shrub	1.7		
	641	PEM1E	Freshwater Marshes	121.8		
	643	PEM2B	Wet Prairies	21.6		
	644	PEM1H	Emergent Aquatic Vegetation	9.6		
<b>Total Freshwater Wetlands</b>					<b>621.5</b>	<b>14.3</b>
Estuarine Streams	510	E1UB2L/ E1UB2N	Streams and Waterways (including rivers)	123.5		
<b>Total Estuarine Streams</b>					<b>123.5</b>	<b>2.8</b>
Estuarine Wetlands	612	E2SS3N	Mangrove Swamps	11.7		
	631	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	0.6		
	642	E2EM1N/ E2EM1P	Saltwater Marshes	113.2		
<b>Total Estuarine Wetlands</b>					<b>125.5</b>	<b>2.9</b>
<b>Total Surface Waters</b>					<b>1,116.8</b>	<b>25.7</b>
<b>Total Uplands</b>					<b>3,230.7</b>	<b>74.3</b>
<b>Total Land Use, Forms, and Vegetative Cover</b>					<b>4,347.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>1</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.

### 2.3.2 RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVE

**Figures 6a through 6h** show the wetland and other surface water types present within the Rye Road Alternative Study Area. Rye Road crosses the Manatee River immediately north of its intersection with Upper Manatee River Road. At this location the river is relatively narrow (approximately 73 feet wide) and shallow with a moderately swift current. Streams and lake swamps (bottomland) surround each side of this river crossing and consist predominately of red maple (*Acer rubrum*), sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*), laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), swamp dogwood (*Cornus foemina*), water oak (*Quercus nigra*), pop ash (*Fraxinus caroliniana*), and cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*).

Golf Course Road crosses Gamble Creek approximately 900 feet east of Jim Davis Road. Gamble Creek flows north to south into the Manatee River. At this crossing, this channelized stream has a moderately swift current and shallow water depth. Adjacent land use types consist of abandoned citrus groves, improved pasture, and upland live oak forests.

Natural wetland systems within the Rye Road Alternative Study Area include several channelized creeks surrounded by forested wetlands which, in turn, are bordered by residential areas or agricultural fields. Dominant vegetation within these forested wetlands consists of red maple, laurel oak, cabbage palm, and sweetbay. All eventually flow to the Manatee River either directly or via connected creeks.

In the southern portion of the Rye Road Alternative Study Area, isolated freshwater marshes are dominated by torpedo grass (*Panicum repens*), pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*), and primrose willow (*Ludwigia peruviana*).

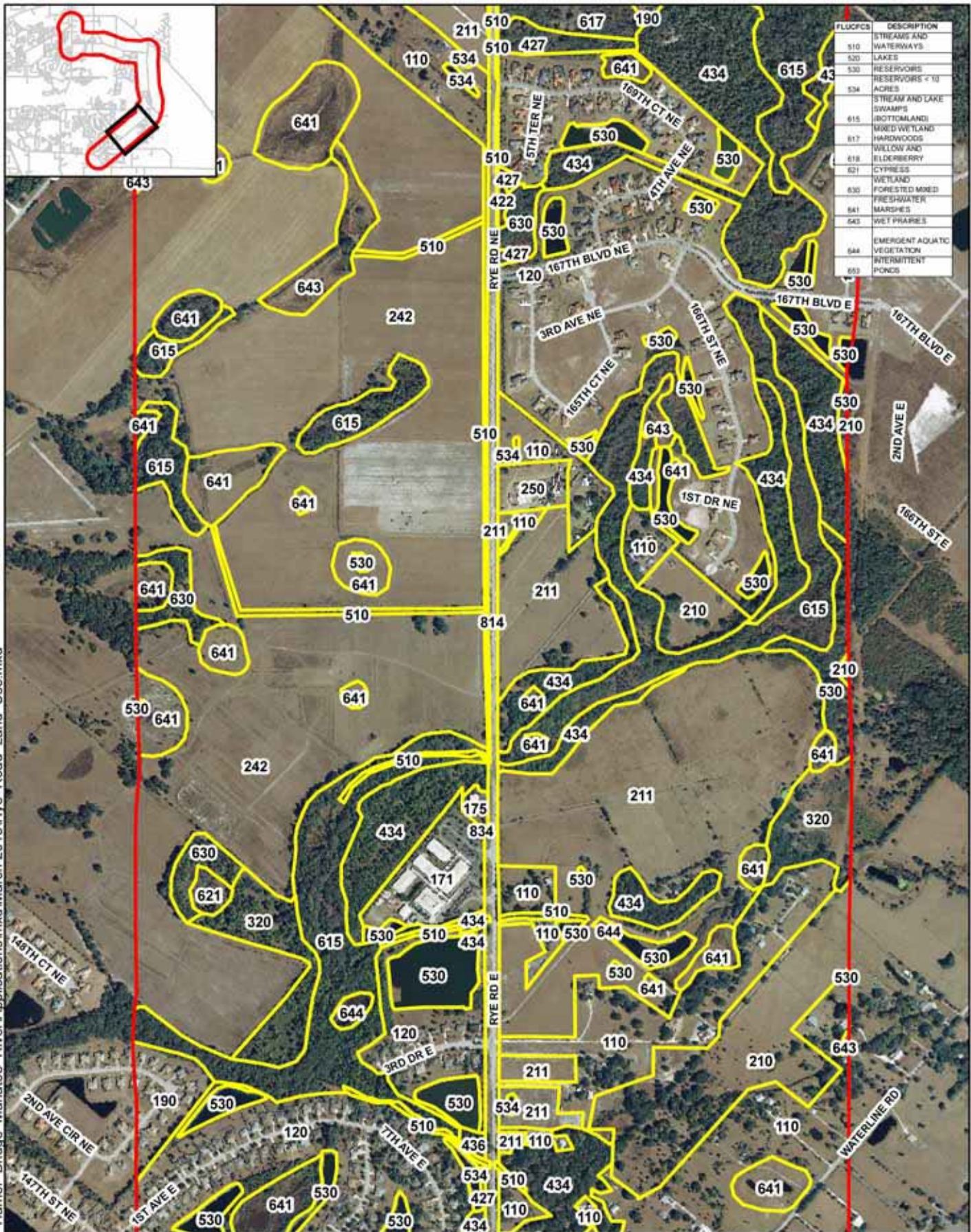
Throughout the Rye Road Alternative Study Area, several isolated reservoirs are present that serve as either livestock ponds, stormwater management facilities for residential subdivisions/golf courses, or have been excavated by private landowners.

**Table 4** lists the wetlands and other surface waters located within the Rye Road Alternative Study Area. Freshwater wetlands and streams, including the Manatee River and Gamble Creek, account for approximately 17.3 percent of the study area. Freshwater lakes, reservoirs, and drainage ditches make up an additional 2.9 percent of the Rye Road study area.









### Legend

- Rye Road Alternative Study Area
- 814 FLUCFCS Boundary and Code

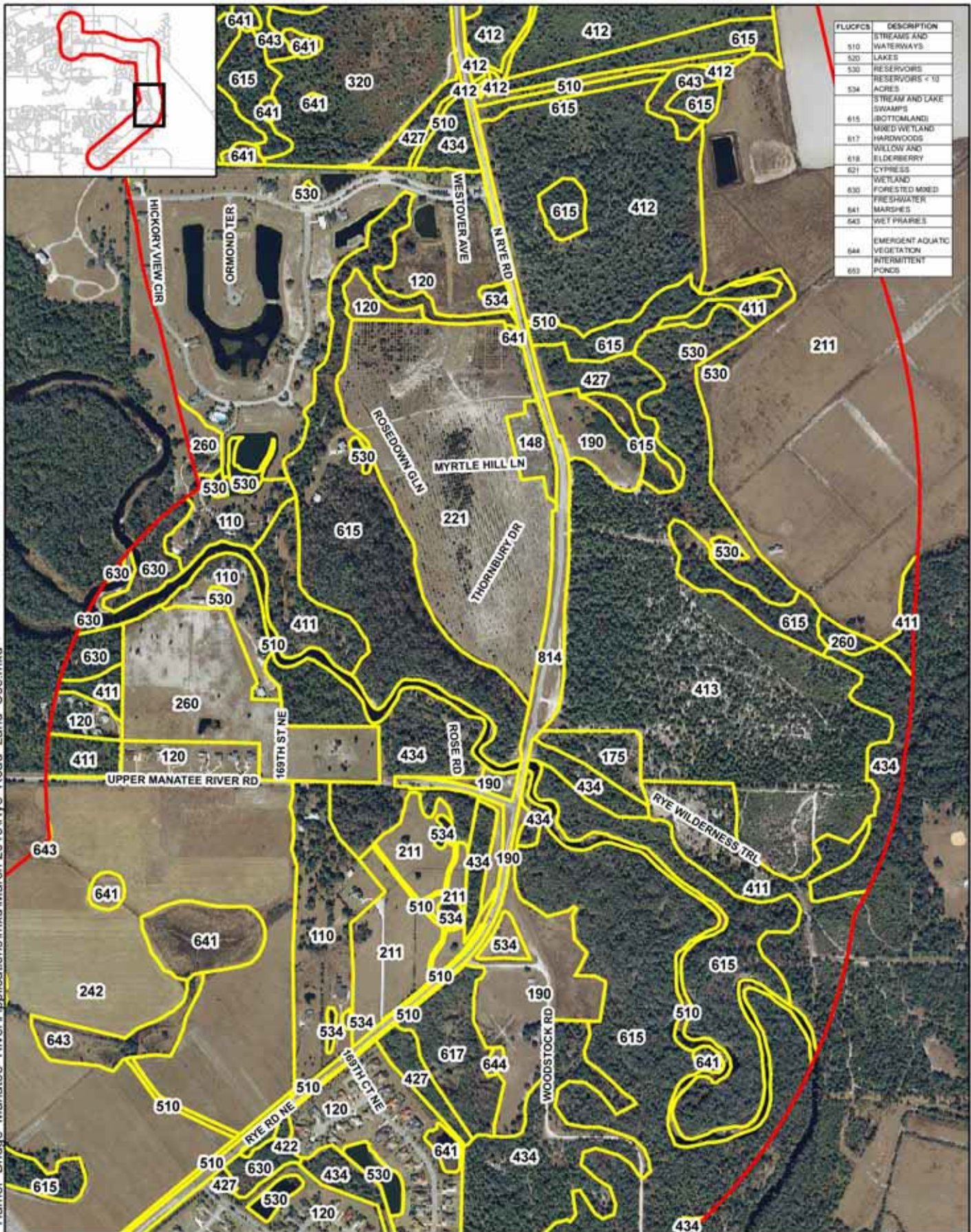
Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 6b  
Wetlands and Other Surface Waters  
within the Rye Road  
Study Area



0 500 1,000  
Feet





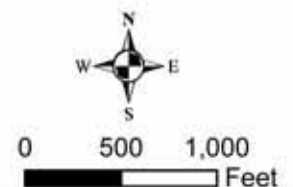
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#### Legend

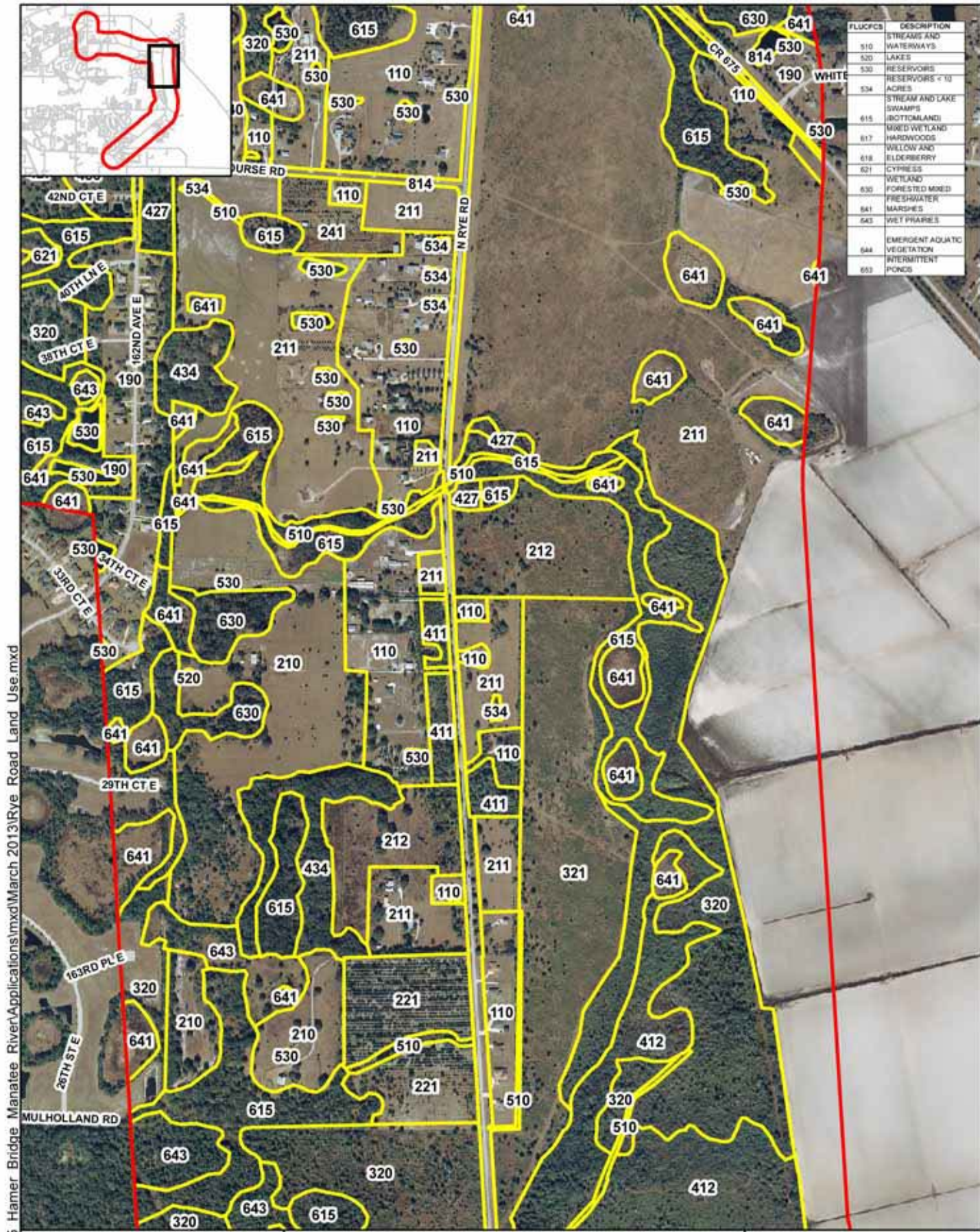
- Rye Road Alternative Study Area
- 814 FLUCFCS Boundary and Code

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 6c  
Wetlands and Other Surface Waters  
within the Rye Road  
Study Area







Path: I:\Projects\12009385\_Hamer Bridge Manatee River\Applications\mxd\March 2013\Rye Road Land Use.mxd

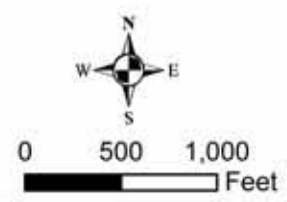
**Legend**

Rye Road Alternative Study Area

814 FLUCFCS Boundary and Code

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

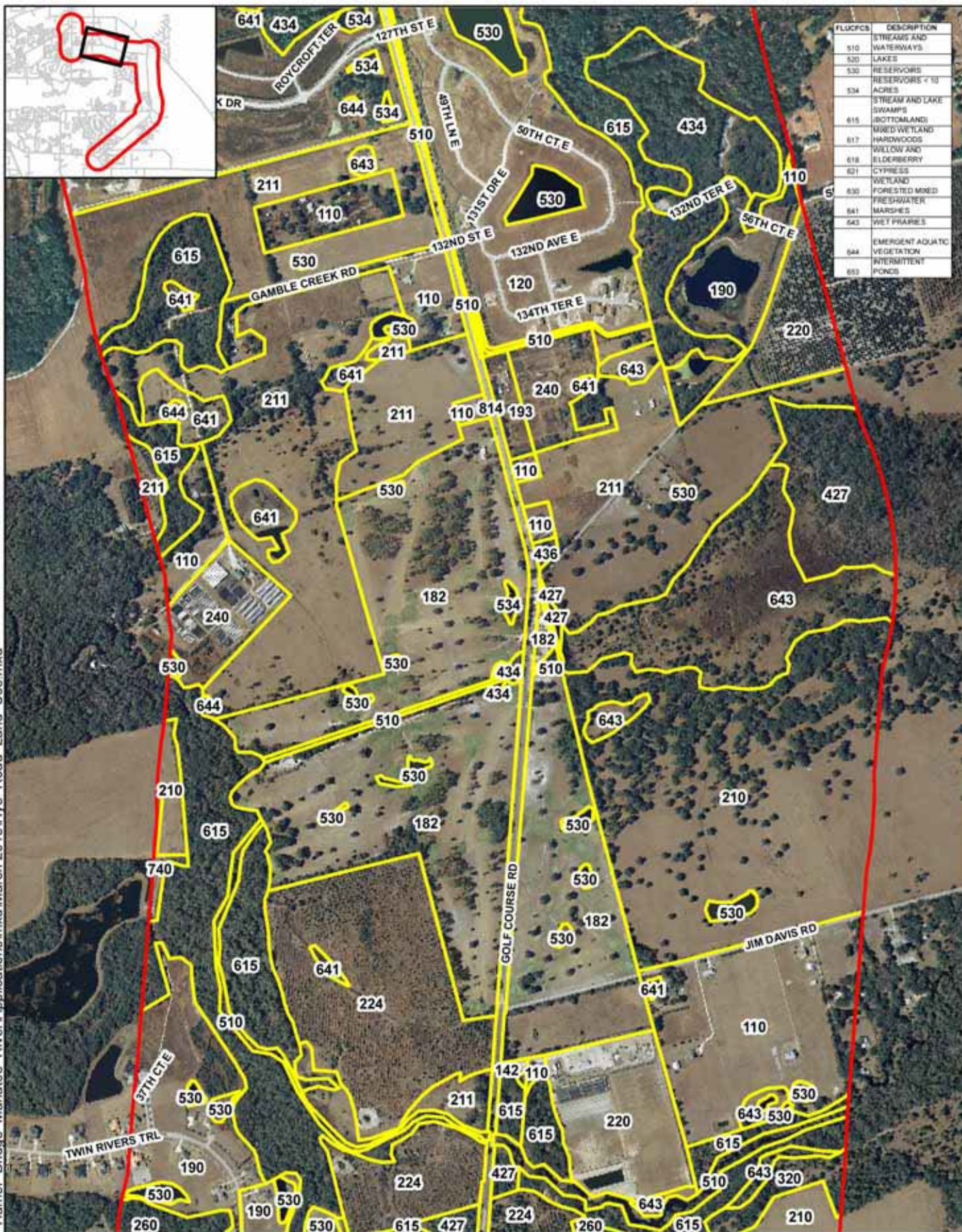
Figure 6d  
Wetlands and Other Surface Waters  
within the Rye Road  
Study Area











### Legend

- Rye Road Alternative Study Area
- 814 FLUCFCS Boundary and Code

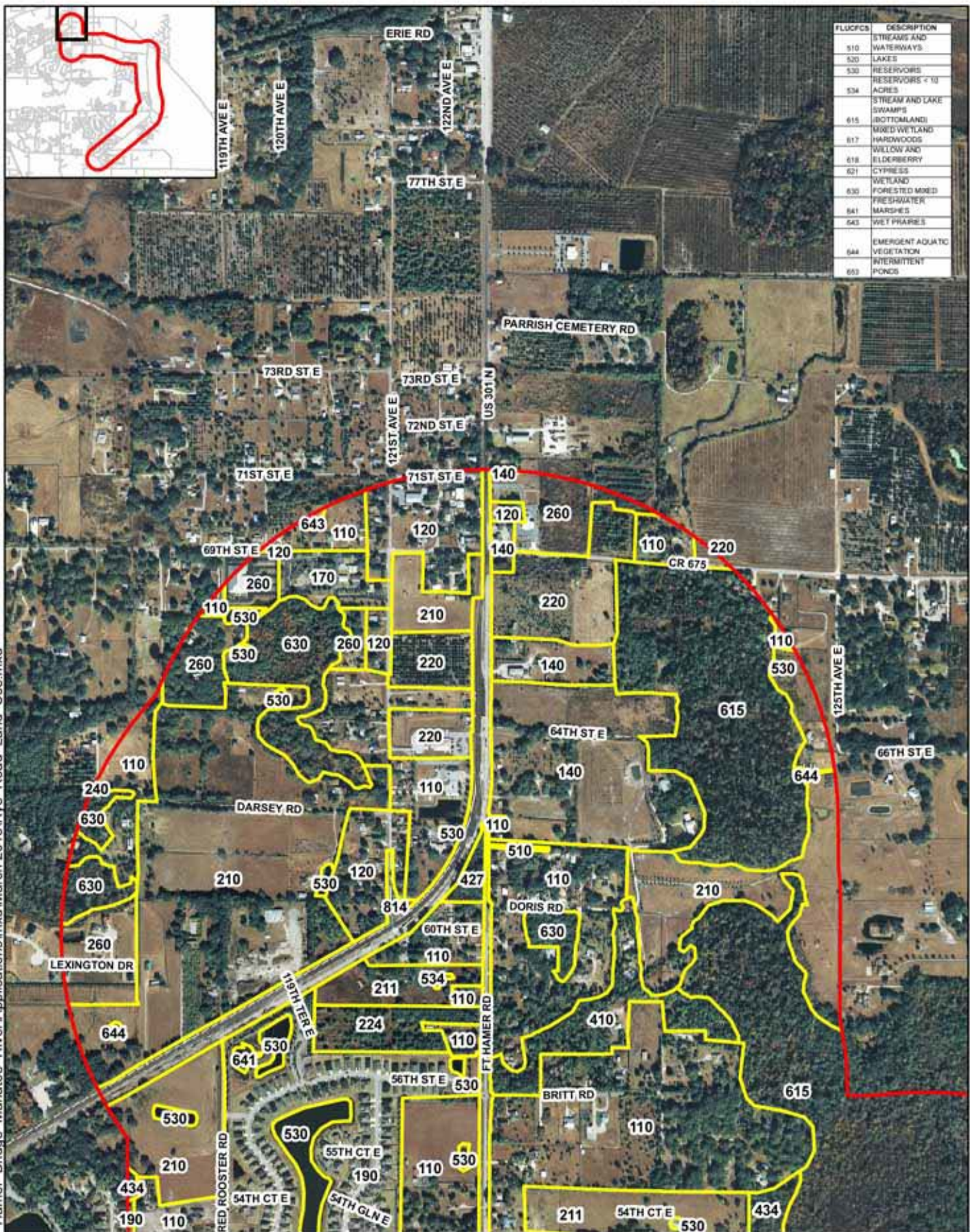
Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 6f  
Wetlands and Other Surface Waters  
within the Rye Road  
Study Area



0 500 1,000  
Feet



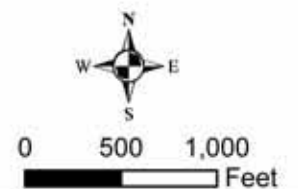


### Legend

- Rye Road Alternative Study Area
- 814 FLUCFCS Boundary and Code

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 6g  
Wetlands and Other Surface Waters  
within the Rye Road  
Study Area









**TABLE 4**  
**WETLANDS AND OTHER SURFACE WATERS WITHIN**  
**THE RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVE STUDY AREA**

	<b>FLUCFCS Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>FWS Classification<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Acres in Study Area</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Study Area</b>
Freshwater Lakes and Reservoirs	520	POWH	Lakes	0.2		
	530	POWHx	Reservoirs (includes stormwater ponds)	172.4		
	534	POWHx	Reservoirs less than 10 acres	13.2		
<b>Total Freshwater Lakes and Reservoirs</b>					<b>185.7</b>	<b>2.5</b>
Drainage Ditches	510	PUB2Jx/PEM1Jx/ R2UB2	Upland-Cut Drainage Ditches/Channelized Creeks	31.0		
<b>Total Freshwater Ditches</b>					<b>31.0</b>	<b>0.4</b>
Freshwater Streams	510	R2UB2	Streams and Waterways (including rivers)	28.7		
<b>Total Freshwater Streams</b>					<b>28.7</b>	<b>0.4</b>
Freshwater Wetlands	615	PFO1P	Stream and Lake Swamps (Bottomland)	814.4		
	617	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	12.9		
	618	PSS1C	Willow and Elderberry	2.8		
	621	PFO2C	Cypress	7.9		
	630	PFO1C	Wetland Forested Mixed	133.9		
	641	PEM1C	Freshwater Marshes	169.8		
	643	PEM1C	Wet Prairies	102.3		
	644	PAB3	Emergent Aquatic Vegetation	8.2		
	653	PUB2	Intermittent Ponds	0.9		
<b>Total Freshwater Wetlands</b>					<b>1,252.9</b>	<b>16.9</b>
<b>Total Surface Waters</b>					<b>1,498.3</b>	<b>20.2</b>
<b>Total Uplands</b>					<b>5,933.0</b>	<b>79.8</b>
<b>Total Land Use, Forms, Vegetative Cover</b>					<b>7,431.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>1</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.

## 2.4 WETLAND AND OTHER SURFACE WATER DESCRIPTIONS

The previous section provided an overview of the surface waters and wetlands within the study areas of the two build alternatives (i.e., within 0.5-mile of the alternative centerline). This section describes the wetlands and other surface waters present within the construction limits of each alternative. Section 3.0 of this WER describes the potential impacts to wetlands and other surface waters that would result from each build alternative.

### 2.4.1 FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE

Four wetlands, one river, and five roadside ditches were identified within the construction limits of the Fort Hamer Alternative. **Figures 7a and 7b** show the location of each of these surface water features and **Table 5** summarizes the type and acreage of each surface water habitat identified within the construction limits.

**TABLE 5**  
**WETLANDS AND OTHER SURFACE WATERS WITHIN**  
**THE FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE CONSTRUCTION LIMITS**

Feature	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>1</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>2</sup>	Description	Acres
Drainage Ditch 1	510	PEM2Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	0.52
Drainage Ditch 2	510	PEM2Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	0.09
Drainage Ditch 3	510	PEM2Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	0.24
Drainage Ditch 4	510	PEM2Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	0.35
Drainage Ditch 5	510	PEM2Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	0.17
Total Drainage Ditches				1.37
Wetland 1	530	POWHx	Pond	0.59
	617	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	0.50
	631	PSS1C	Wetland Scrub	1.48
	Sub-total Wetland 1			2.57
Wetland 2	510	E1UB2N	Tidal Creek	0.12
	631	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	0.59
	642	E2EM1P	Saltmarsh	0.67
	Sub-total Wetland 2			1.38
Wetland 3	612	E2SS3N	Mangroves	0.16
	615	PFO1P	Stream and Lake Swamps (Bottomland)	0.65
	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	1.58
	Sub-total Wetland 3			2.39
Wetland 4	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh (Shoreline)	0.14
	Sub-total Wetland 4			0.14
Total Wetlands				6.48
River 1	510	E1UB2L	Manatee River (open water portion)	3.22
Total Rivers				3.22
Total Surface Waters				11.07

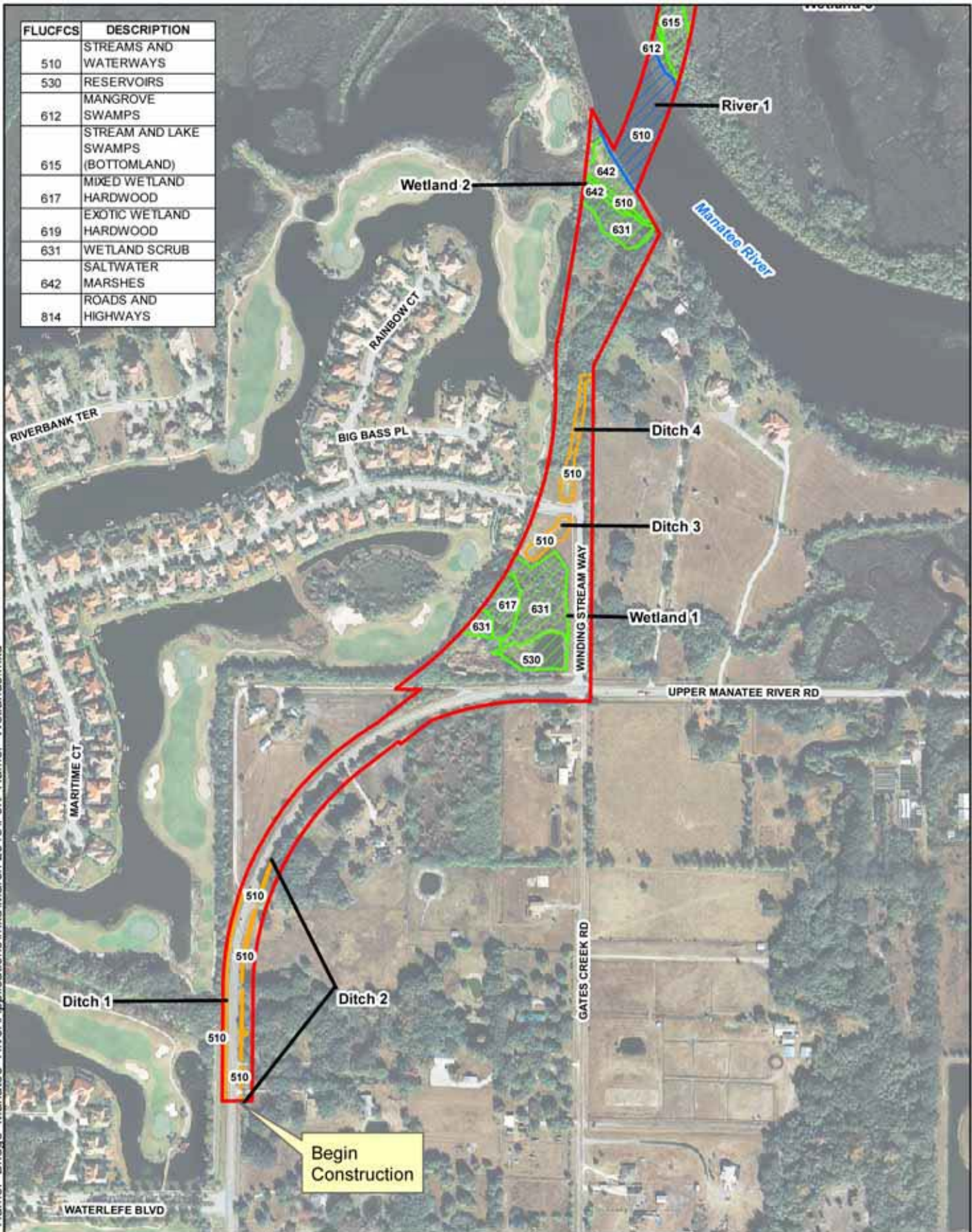
<sup>1</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.

Descriptions of these surface waters are provided in the following paragraphs beginning at the southern terminus of the construction limits and continuing to the northern terminus of the construction limits.

FLUCFCS	DESCRIPTION
510	STREAMS AND WATERWAYS
530	RESERVOIRS
612	MANGROVE SWAMPS
615	STREAM AND LAKE SWAMPS (BOTTOMLAND)
617	MIXED WETLAND HARDWOOD
619	EXOTIC WETLAND HARDWOOD
631	WETLAND SCRUB
642	SALTWATER MARSHES
814	ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

Path: I:\Projects\12009385 Hamer Bridge Manatee River\Applications\mxd\March 2013\Fort Hamer Wetlands.mxd



#### Legend

  Construction Limits

  Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code

  Ditch

  River

  Wetland

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

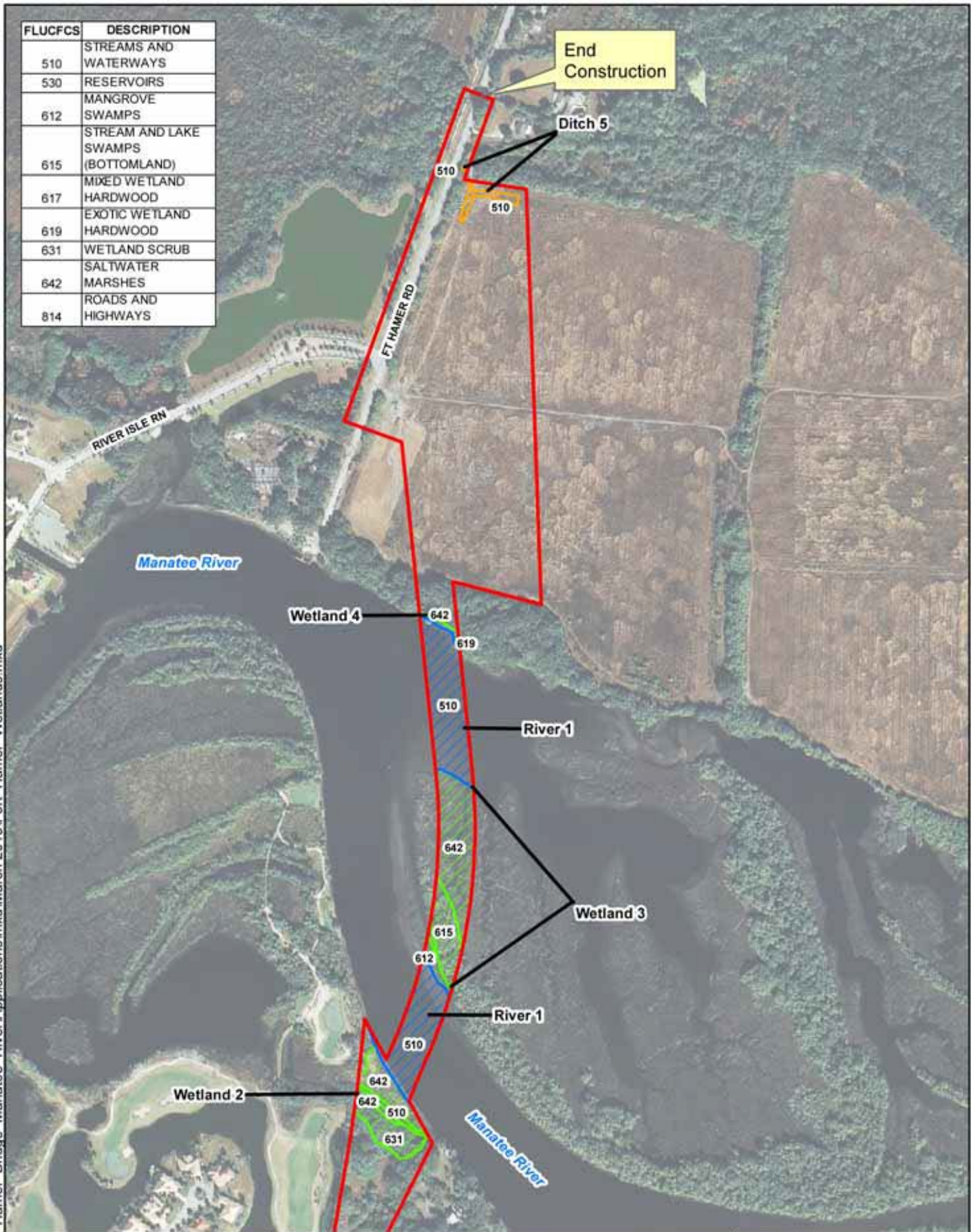
Figure 7a  
Wetlands and Other Surface Waters  
within the Fort Hamer Alternative  
Construction Limits



0 250 500  
Feet



FLUCFCS	DESCRIPTION
510	STREAMS AND WATERWAYS
530	RESERVOIRS
612	MANGROVE SWAMPS
615	STREAM AND LAKE SWAMPS (BOTTOMLAND)
617	MIXED WETLAND HARDWOOD
619	EXOTIC WETLAND HARDWOOD
631	WETLAND SCRUB
642	SALTWATER MARSHES
814	ROADS AND HIGHWAYS



#### Legend

  Construction Limits

Surface Water Boundary  
w/ FLUCFCS Code

  Ditch  
  River  
  Wetland

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 7b  
Wetlands and Other Surface Waters  
within the Fort Hamer Alternative  
Construction Limits



0 250 500  
Feet

### **Drainage Ditch 1**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways*

**FWS:** PEM2Jx (*Palustrine, Emergent, Non-Persistent, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

Drainage Ditch 1 is located along the west side of Upper Manatee River Road north of the entrance to the Waterlefe subdivision. This ditch consists of a maintained swale excavated from upland soils and is connected to Drainage Ditch 2 (described below) via metal culverts underneath Upper Manatee River Road. This swale does not have vegetation along the banks, but does contain herbaceous groundcover such as torpedo grass and dayflower (*Commelina* spp.). Drainage Ditch 1 comprises 0.52 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

### **Drainage Ditch 2**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways*

**FWS:** PEM2Jx (*Palustrine, Emergent, Non-Persistent, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

Drainage Ditch 2 is located along the east side of Upper Manatee River Road north of the entrance to the Waterlefe subdivision. This maintained ditch is constructed within upland soils and is connected to Drainage Ditch 1 via metal culverts beneath Upper Manatee River Road. The ditch flows eastward along Upper Manatee River Road and eventually drains to an estuarine creek that serves as a tributary to the Manatee River. This ditch does not have vegetation along the banks, but does contain herbaceous groundcover such as torpedo grass and dayflower. Drainage Ditch 2 comprises 0.09 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

### **Wetland 1**

**FLUCFCS:** 530 – *Reservoirs*

617 – *Mixed Wetland Hardwoods*

631 – *Wetland Scrub*

**FWS:** POWHx (*Palustrine, Open Water, Permanently Flooded, Excavated*)

PFO1C (*Palustrine, Forested, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Seasonally Flooded*)

PSS1C (*Palustrine, Scrub-Shrub, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Seasonally Flooded*)

Wetland 1 is located south of the Manatee River at the intersection of Winding Stream Way and Upper Manatee River Road. This isolated wetland is a combination of three wetland habitat types; wetland scrub-shrub, mixed wetland hardwood forest, and freshwater pond. The wetland scrub is dominated by woody shrub and herbaceous species including saltbush (*Baccharis halimifolia*), Carolina willow (*Salix caroliniana*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*), yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris* spp.), water pennywort (*Hydrocotyle umbellata*), bushy broom grass (*Andropogon glomeratus*), arrowhead (*Sagittaria* spp.), soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), and sand cord grass (*Spartina bakeri*). The scrub component of Wetland 1 covers 1.48 acres of the Fort Hamer Alternative.



The mixed wetland hardwood forest in Wetland 1 is dominated by live oak (*Quercus virginiana*), laurel oak, American elm (*Ulmus americana*), Carolina willow, cabbage palm, yellow-eyed grass, sword fern (*Nephrolepis* spp.), and cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*). The mixed wetland hardwood forest component of Wetland 1 covers 0.50 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

The pond portion of Wetland 1 appears to be an excavated borrow pit and is mostly open water with an emergent littoral fringe of vegetation. The littoral zone is dominated by East Indian Hygrophila (*Hygrophila polysperma*), torpedo grass, water pennywort, smartweed (*Polygonum* spp.), dayflower, water-lily (*Nymphaea* spp.), and cattail (*Typha* spp.). Wax myrtle, buttonbush, and saltbush are also present landward of the emergent species in the littoral zone. Although not a dominant species, Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) is present in the west and south portions of Wetland 1. The open water pond component of Wetland 1 covers 0.59 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

Wetland 1 covers a total of 2.57 acres within the Fort Hamer Alternative.

### **Drainage Ditch 3**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways*

**FWS:** PEM2Jx (*Palustrine, Emergent, Non-Persistent, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

Drainage Ditch 3 is located south of the Manatee River west and south of Winding Stream Way. This stormwater management ditch was excavated from upland soils. The ditch is dominated by emergent herbaceous species, including torpedo grass, water pennywort, alligator weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*), duckweed (*Lemna* spp.), nut sedge (*Cyperus rotundus*), arrowhead, pickerelweed, and filamentous algae. This ditch connects to Drainage Ditch 4 (described below) via a metal culvert underneath Winding Stream Way. Drainage Ditch 3 comprises 0.24 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

### **Drainage Ditch 4**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways*

**FWS:** PEM2Jx (*Palustrine, Emergent, Non-Persistent, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

Drainage Ditch 4 is located south of the Manatee River west and north of Winding Stream Way. This stormwater management ditch was excavated from upland soils. The southern portion of this ditch is dominated by emergent herbaceous species, including torpedo grass, water pennywort, alligator weed, duckweed, nut sedge, arrowhead, pickerelweed, and filamentous algae. The northern portion of this ditch is overgrown with Brazilian pepper. The south end of the ditch is connected to Drainage Ditch 3 and the north end terminates in a live oak-dominated upland area. Drainage Ditch 4 comprises 0.35 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

## **Wetland 2**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways (Tidal Creek)*

631 – *Wetland Scrub*

642 – *Saltwater Marshes*

**FWS:** E1UB2N (*Estuarine, Sub-Tidal, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand, Regularly Flooded*)

E2SS3A (*Estuarine, Inter-Tidal, Scrub-Shrub, Broad-Leaved Evergreen, Temporarily Flooded*)

E2EM1P (*Estuarine, Inter-tidal, Emergent, Persistent, Irregularly Flooded*)

Wetland 2 is located south of the Manatee River and north of Winding Stream Way. This wetland is a combination of three wetland habitat types, including saltwater marsh, wetland scrub, and a short segment of tidally influenced creek. The saltwater marsh is dominated by herbaceous species including black needle rush, leather fern (*Acrostichum* spp.), and sand cord grass. The saltwater marsh component of Wetland 2 covers 0.67 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

The scrub portion of Wetland 2 is dominated by saltbush, wax myrtle, Brazilian pepper, red mangroves (*Rhizophora mangle*), and black mangroves (*Avicennia germinans*). The understory of this area is heavily shaded and contains mostly leaf litter on the wetland surface. The wetland scrub component of Wetland 2 covers 0.59 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

A tidally influenced creek flows through Wetland 2 and connects other wetlands in the Waterlefe subdivision to the Manatee River. The creek consists mostly of unconsolidated sandy and muck sediments, but is lined with red mangroves and leather fern. A patch of widgeon grass (*Ruppia maritima*) was observed within this creek. This creek covers 0.12 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative in Wetland 2.

Wetland 2 covers a total of 1.38 acres of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

## **River 1**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways (Open Water Portion of River)*

**FWS:** E1UB2L (*Estuarine, Sub-Tidal, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand, Sub-Tidal*)

The Fort Hamer Alternative crosses the Manatee River. The southern portion of the crossing is the major flow channel of the river with a maximum depth of approximately 12 feet at mean high tide. This area is mostly open water with a sandy bottom and a thin littoral fringe of emergent vegetation on the south bank. Dominant vegetation observed in the littoral fringe includes black needle rush, red mangroves, and black mangroves. Widgeon grass was also observed along a narrow strip on the north side of the main river channel, immediately waterward of Wetland 3 (described below). The widgeon grass in this area occurred in scattered patches with each patch consisting of generally less than 10 percent coverage by short, thin-bladed stems and leaves. These patches were separated by areas of bare sand substrate.

The north portion of the river crossing is located north of Wetland 3 and consists of a shallow embayment with a fine, silty-sand bottom. This portion of the river is mostly sub-tidal; however, the bottom may be exposed on very low winter tides. The north shoreline of the river is bordered by Wetland 4 (described below).

River 1 comprises 3.22 acres of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

### **Wetland 3**

**FLUCFCS:** 612 – *Mangrove Swamps*

615 – *Stream and Lake Swamps (Bottomland)*

642 – *Saltwater Marshes*

**FWS:** E2SS3N (*Estuarine, Inter-Tidal, Scrub-Shrub, Broad-Leaved Evergreen, Regularly Flooded*)

PFO1P (*Palustrine, Forested, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Irregularly Flooded*)

E2EM1N (*Estuarine, Inter-Tidal, Emergent, Persistent, Regularly Flooded*)

Wetland 3 is low peninsula located immediately north of the main river channel and consists of a combination of three wetland habitat types: mangrove swamp, stream and lake (bottomland) swamp, and saltwater marsh. The mangrove swamp is dominated by red mangrove, black mangrove, and black needle rush. Leather fern and water hyssop (*Bacopa* spp.) are also present as associate species. The area of mangrove swamp within Wetland 3 comprises 0.16 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

Bottomland swamp in Wetland 3 occurs on and between depositional features that are slightly higher in elevation than the adjacent mangrove swamp. This area is dominated by laurel oak, water oak, swamp bay (*Persea palustris*), cabbage palm, Myrsine (*Myrsine guianensis*), buttonbush, saw-grass (*Cladium jamaicense*), leather fern, low panicums (*Panicum* spp.), and chalky bluestem grass (*Andropogon virginicus* var. *glaucus*). Upland vegetation consisting of live oak, Brazilian pepper, and red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) is also present along the thin depositional berm adjacent to the river; however, these areas are generally too small to separate from the surrounding bottomland swamp and, therefore, are included in that classification. The area of bottomland swamp within Wetland 3 comprises 0.65 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

The saltmarsh portion of Wetland 3 is located north of the bottomland swamp portion of the wetland. The saltmarsh is dominated by black needle rush, but also has a narrow open water tidal creek. Leather fern and red mangroves were present as associate species. The area of saltmarsh within Wetland 3 comprises 1.58 acres of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

Wetland 3 covers a total of 2.39 acres of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

### **Wetland 4**

**FLUCFCS:** 642 – *Saltwater Marshes*

**FWS:** E2EM1N (*Estuarine, Inter-Tidal, Emergent, Persistent, Regularly Flooded*)

Wetland 4 is located along the north bank of the Manatee River east of the Fort Hamer Road boat ramp and contains a narrow strip of tidally-influenced shoreline with patches of black needle rush, red mangrove, and black mangrove. Wetland 4 comprises 0.14 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

## **Drainage Ditch 5**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways*

**FWS:** PEM2Jx (*Palustrine, Emergent, Non-Persistent, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

Drainage Ditch 5 is located at the north end of the Fort Hamer Alternative, north of the entrance to Rive Isle Golf and Nautical Estates subdivision and east of Fort Hamer Road. This drainage ditch was excavated from upland soils and is connected to a forested wetland west of the project area via a metal culvert underneath Fort Hamer Road. The ditch is dominated by herbaceous species, including cinnamon fern, ragweed, muscadine grape (*Vitis rotundifolia*), and dayflower. Brazilian pepper overhangs the ditch until it opens into fallow crop land east of Fort Hamer Road. Drainage Ditch 5 comprises 0.17 acre of the Fort Hamer Alternative.

### **2.4.2 RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVE**

Eleven wetlands, two rivers (including Gamble Creek), one pond, and eight roadside ditches were identified within the construction limits of the Rye Road Alternative. **Figures 8a through 8o** show the location of each of these surface water features and **Table 6** summarizes the type and acreage of each surface water habitat identified within the construction limits.

Descriptions of these surface waters are provided in the following paragraphs, beginning at the southern terminus and continuing north to the northern terminus of the Rye Road Alternative.

## **Wetland 5**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways (Channelized Stream)*

**FWS:** PUB2Jx (*Palustrine, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

This is a wet ditch bisected by Rye Road approximately 350 feet northeast of 18<sup>th</sup> Place East. This ditch appears to be a channelized stream that runs perpendicular to Rye Road and eventually terminates into an unnamed tributary of the Manatee River outside of the Rye Road Alternative. On the northwest side of Rye Road, the ditch contains steep banks with sparse vegetation, including wild taro and chain fern, under a dense canopy of upland, pine/oak forest. On the southeast side of Rye Road, this ditch has steep banks that had been recently shaped and seeded. No vegetation was observed in this portion of the ditch, but mosquito fish (*Gambusia holbrooki*) and sailfin mollies (*Poecilia letipinna*) were present. During the field review, water was present and flowing from the south to the north. This ditch comprises 0.06 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.



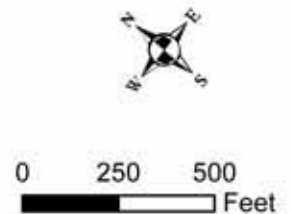


**Legend**

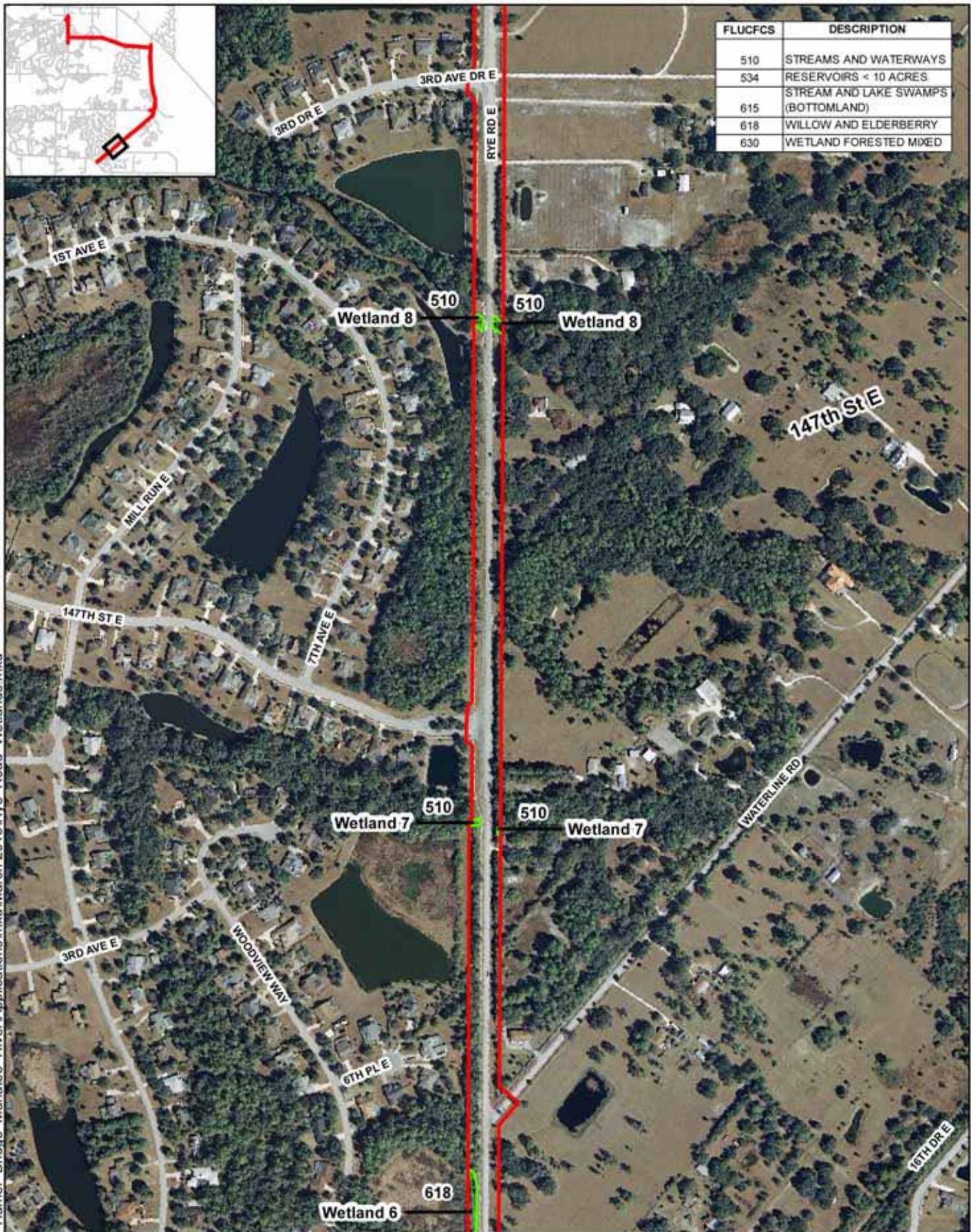
- Construction Limits
- Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code
- Ditch
- River
- Wetland

**Sources:**  
 Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
 FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
 URS Field Reviews

**Figure 8a**  
 Surface Water and Wetlands  
 within the Rye Road Alternative  
 Construction Limits







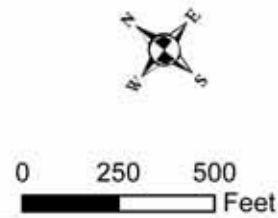
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**Legend**

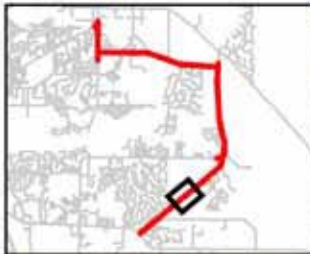
- Construction Limits
- Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code
- Ditch
- River
- Wetland

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

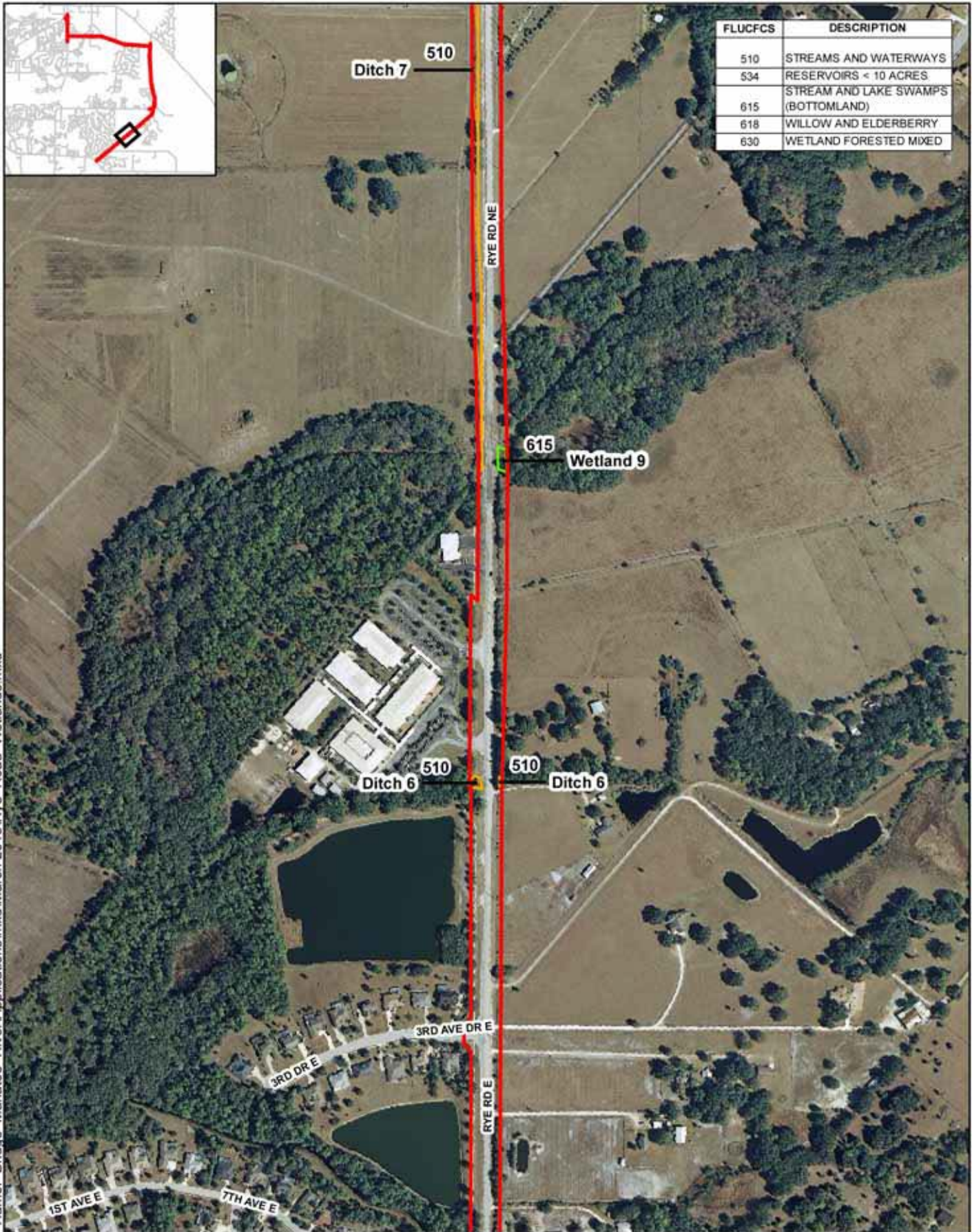
Figure 8b  
Surface Water and Wetlands  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Construction Limits







FLUCFCS	DESCRIPTION
510	STREAMS AND WATERWAYS
534	RESERVOIRS < 10 ACRES
615	STREAM AND LAKE SWAMPS (BOTTOMLAND)
618	WILLOW AND ELDERBERRY
630	WETLAND FORESTED MIXED



- Legend**
- Construction Limits
  - Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code
  - Ditch
  - River
  - Wetland

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 8c  
Surface Water and Wetlands  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Construction Limits



0 250 500  
Feet



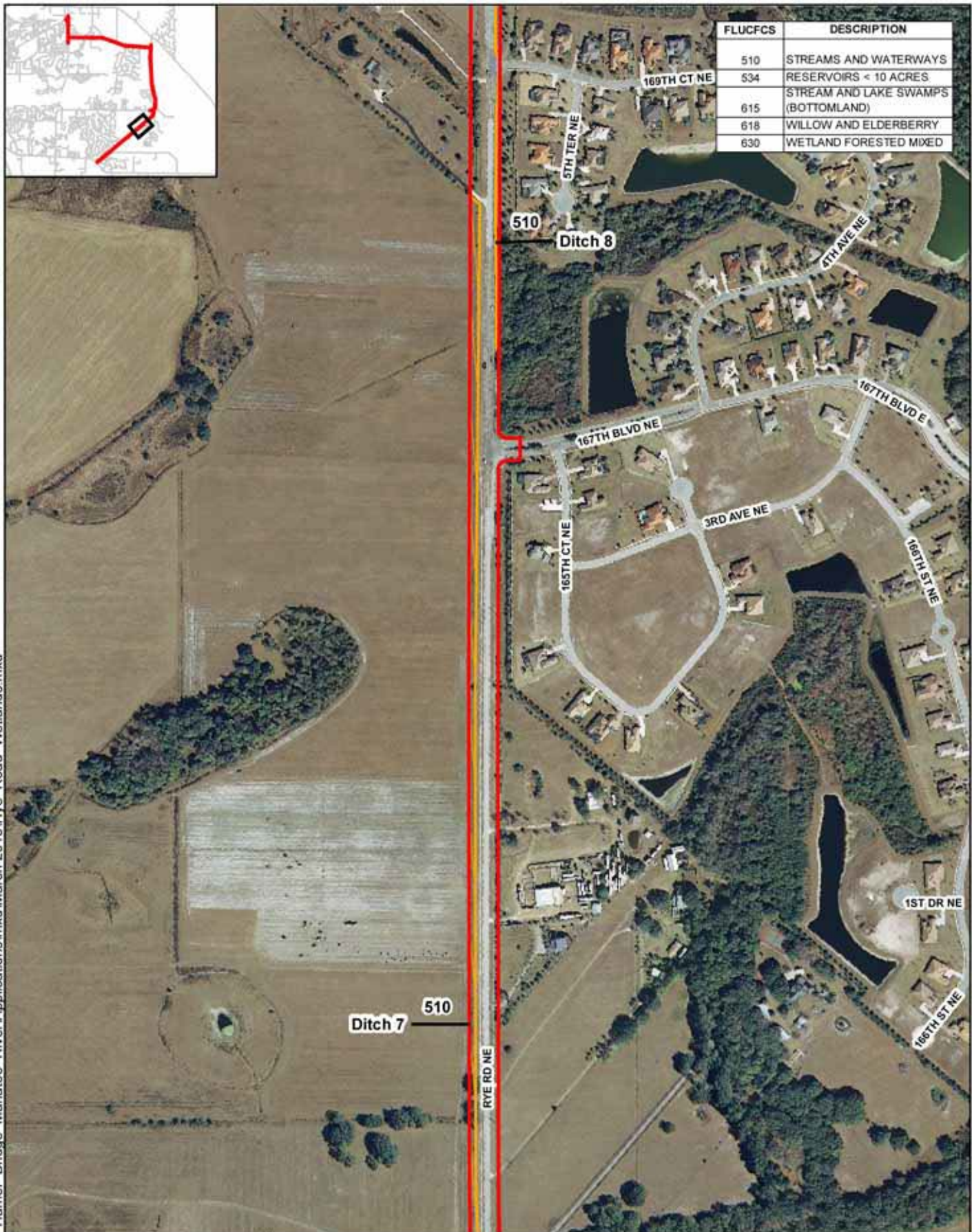


Figure 8d  
Surface Water and Wetlands  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Construction Limits

**Legend**  
 Construction Limits  
 Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code  
 Ditch  
 River  
 Wetland

Sources:  
 Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
 FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
 URS Field Reviews



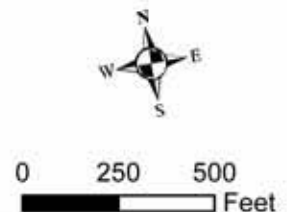
0 250 500  
 Feet



Path: I:\Projects\12009385 Hamer Bridge Manatee River\Applications\mxd\March 2013\Rye Road Wetlands.mxd



Figure 8e  
Surface Water and Wetlands  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Construction Limits







FLUCFCS	DESCRIPTION
510	STREAMS AND WATERWAYS
534	RESERVOIRS < 10 ACRES
615	STREAM AND LAKE SWAMPS (BOTTOMLAND)
618	WILLOW AND ELDERBERRY
630	WETLAND FORESTED MIXED

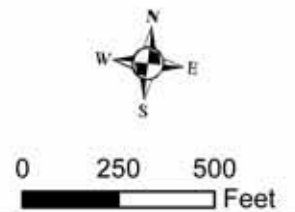


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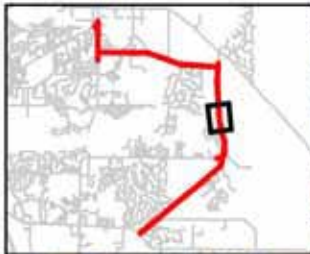
- Construction Limits
- Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code
- Ditch
- River
- Wetland

**Sources:**  
 Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
 FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
 URS Field Reviews

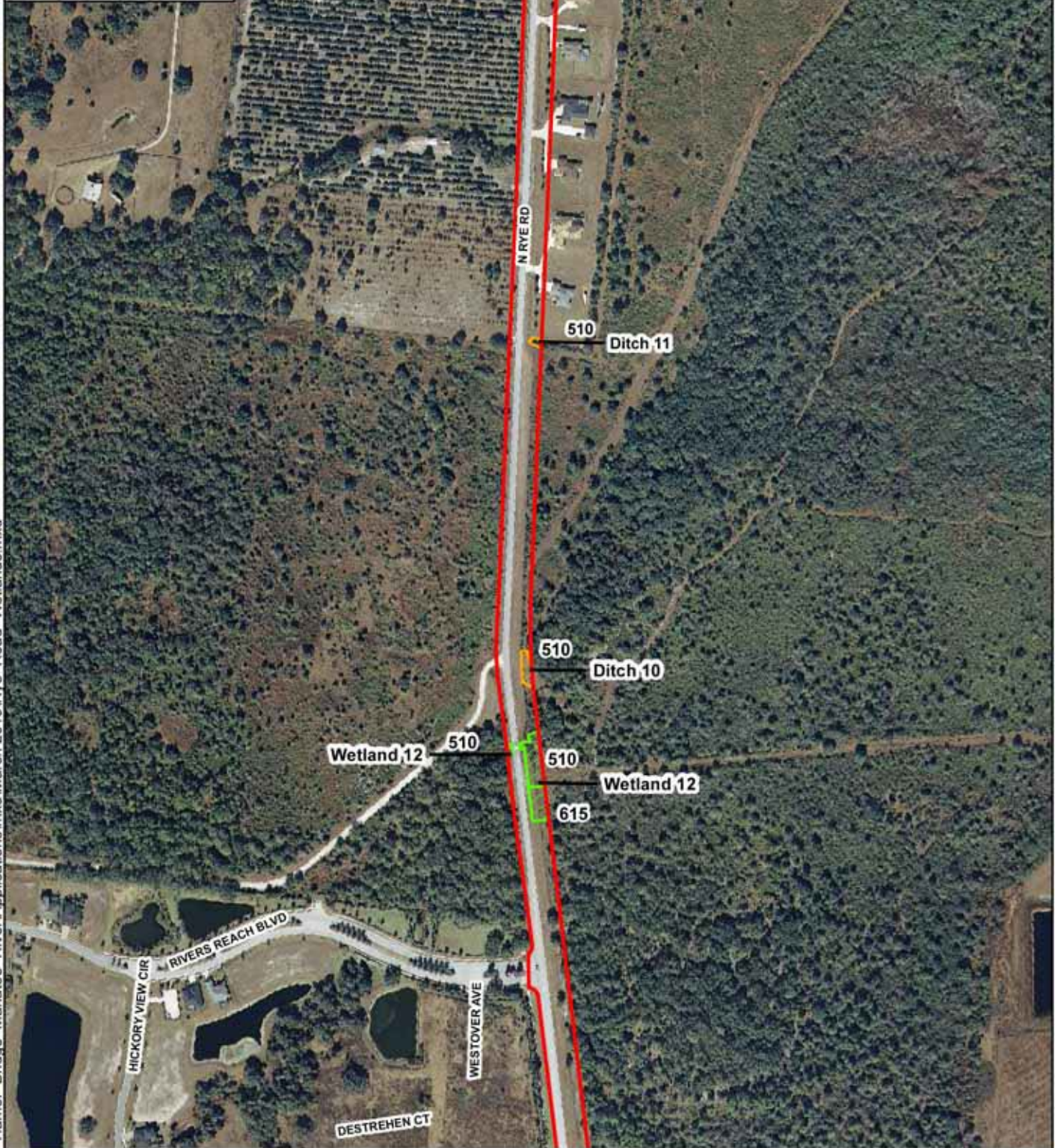
**Figure 8f**  
 Surface Water and Wetlands  
 within the Rye Road Alternative  
 Construction Limits







FLUCFCS	DESCRIPTION
510	STREAMS AND WATERWAYS
534	RESERVOIRS < 10 ACRES
615	STREAM AND LAKE SWAMPS (BOTTOMLAND)
618	WILLOW AND ELDERBERRY
630	WETLAND FORESTED MIXED



**Legend**

- Construction Limits
- Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code
- Ditch
- River
- Wetland

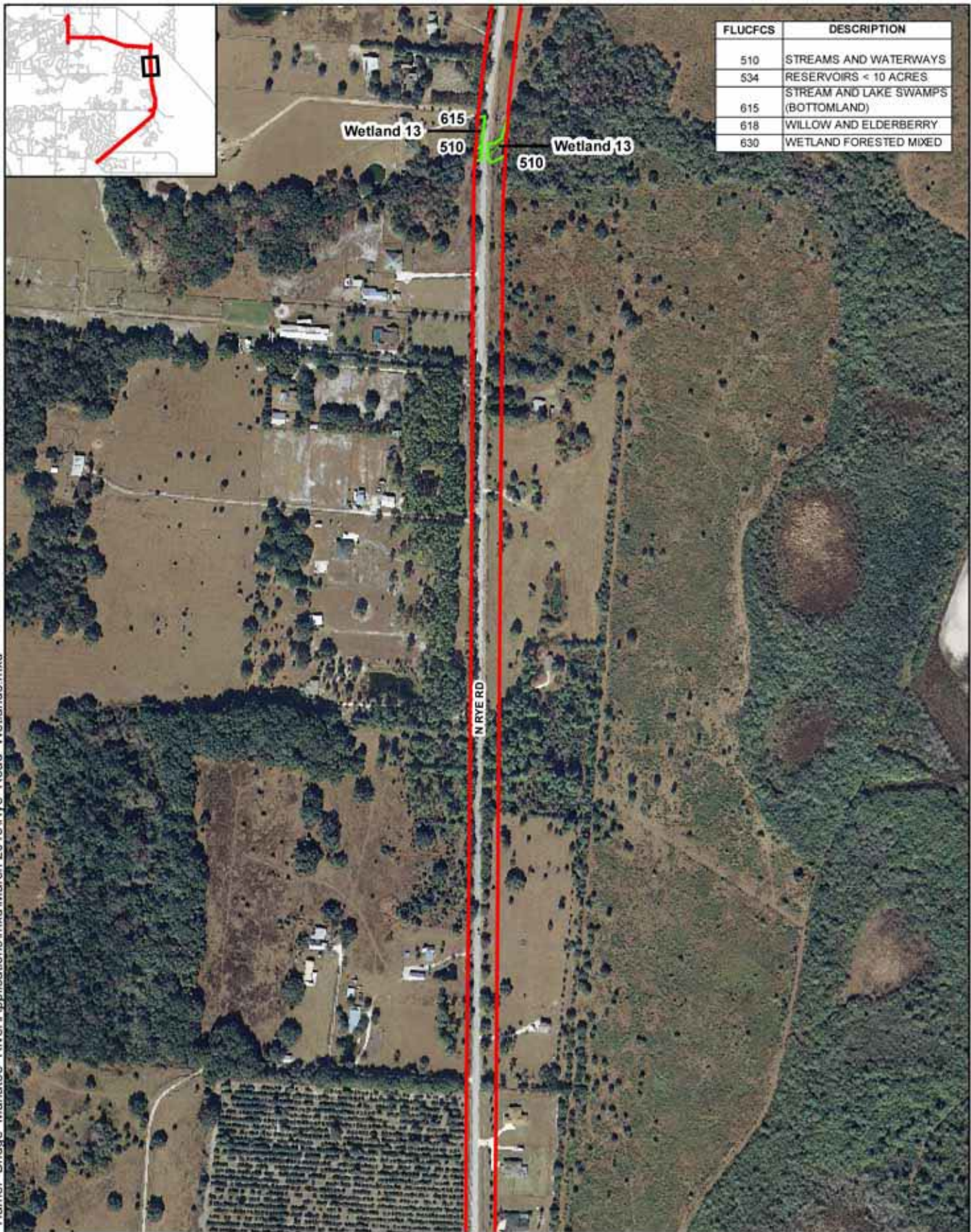
Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

**Figure 8g**  
Surface Water and Wetlands  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Construction Limits



0 250 500  
Feet





Path: I:\Projects\12009385\_Hamer Bridge Manatee River\Applications\mxd\March 2013\Rye Road Wetlands.mxd



Path: I:\Projects\12009385\_Hamer Bridge Manatee River\Applications\mxd\March 2013\Rye Road Wetlands.mxd

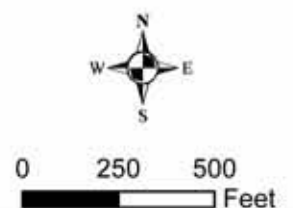


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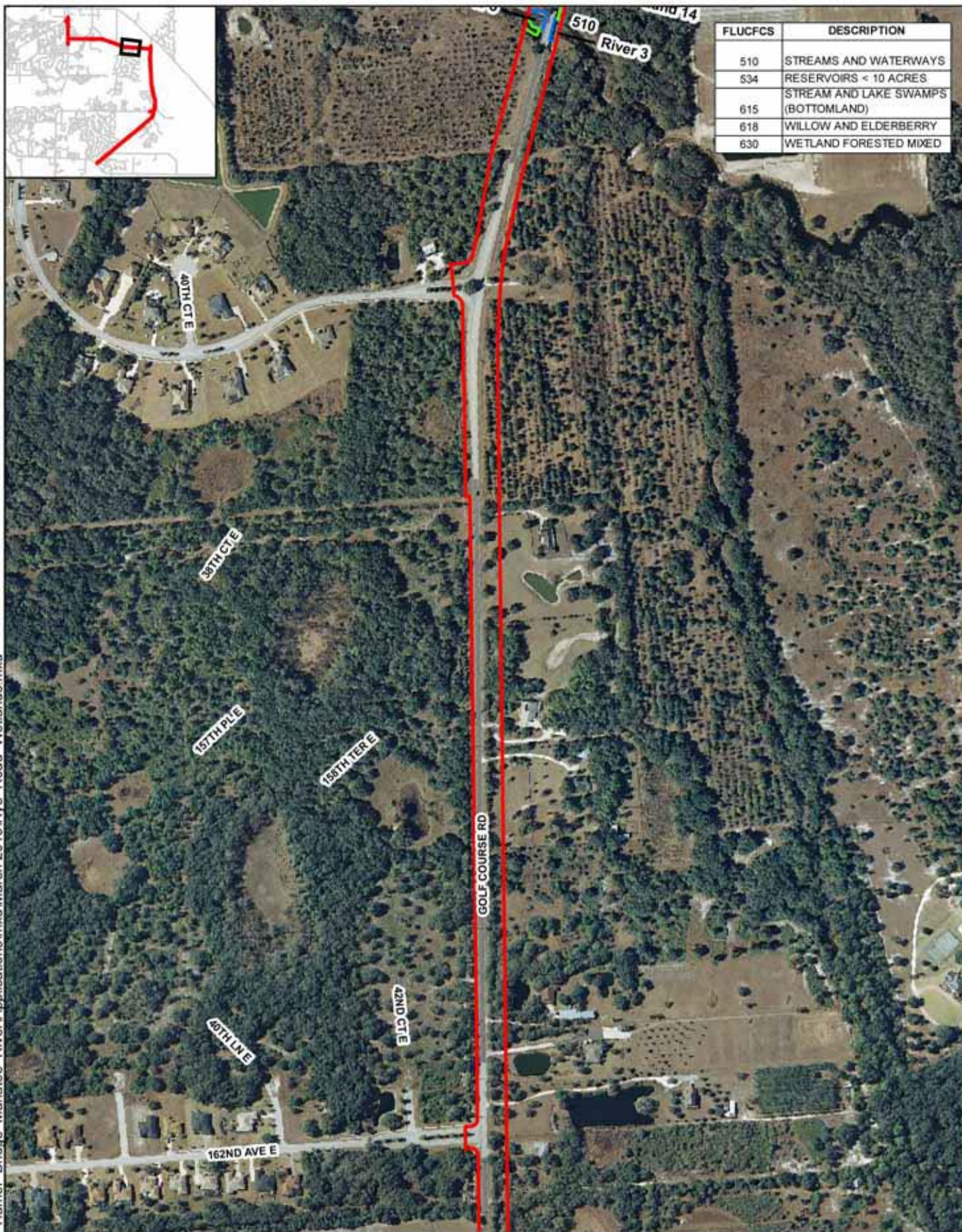
- Construction Limits
- Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code
- Ditch
- River
- Wetland

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 8i  
Surface Water and Wetlands  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Construction Limits





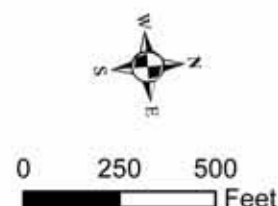


**Legend**

- Construction Limits
- Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code
- Ditch
- River
- Wetland

Sources:  
 Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
 FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
 URS Field Reviews

Figure 8j  
 Surface Water and Wetlands  
 within the Rye Road Alternative  
 Construction Limits







FLUCFCS	DESCRIPTION
510	STREAMS AND WATERWAYS
534	RESERVOIRS < 10 ACRES
615	STREAM AND LAKE SWAMPS (BOTTOMLAND)
618	WILLOW AND ELDERBERRY
630	WETLAND FORESTED MIXED



- Legend**
- ▬ Construction Limits
  - ▬ Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code
  - ▬ Ditch
  - ▬ River
  - ▬ Wetland

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 8k  
Surface Water and Wetlands  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Construction Limits



0 250 500  
Feet





FLUCFCS	DESCRIPTION
510	STREAMS AND WATERWAYS
534	RESERVOIRS < 10 ACRES
615	STREAM AND LAKE SWAMPS (BOTTOMLAND)
618	WILLOW AND ELDERBERRY
630	WETLAND FORESTED MIXED

- Legend**
- Construction Limits
  - Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code
  - Ditch
  - River
  - Wetland

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 8I  
Surface Water and Wetlands  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Construction Limits



0 250 500  
Feet



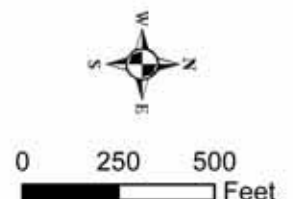


**Legend**

- Construction Limits
- Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code
- Ditch
- River
- Wetland

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 8m  
Surface Water and Wetlands  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Construction Limits





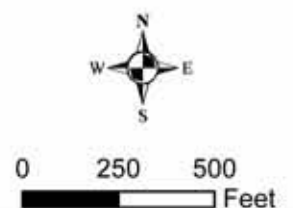


**Legend**

- Construction Limits
- Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code
- Ditch
- River
- Wetland

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 8n  
Surface Water and Wetlands  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Construction Limits





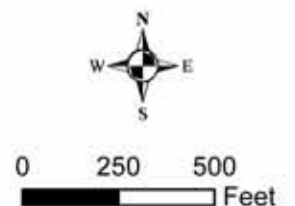


FLUCFCS	DESCRIPTION
510	STREAMS AND WATERWAYS
534	RESERVOIRS < 10 ACRES
615	STREAM AND LAKE SWAMPS (BOTTOMLAND)
618	WILLOW AND ELDERBERRY
630	WETLAND FORESTED MIXED

- Legend**
- Construction Limits
  - Surface Water Boundary w/ FLUCFCS Code
  - Ditch
  - River
  - Wetland

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
FLUCFCS- SWFWMD, 2009 &  
URS Field Reviews

Figure 8o  
Surface Water and Wetlands  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Construction Limits





**TABLE 6**  
**WETLANDS AND OTHER SURFACE WATERS WITHIN**  
**THE RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVE CONSTRUCTION LIMITS**

<b>Feature</b>	<b>FLUCFCS Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>FWS Classification<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Drainage Ditch 6	510	PUB2Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	0.05
Drainage Ditch 7	510	PUB2Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	2.77
Drainage Ditch 8	510	PEM1Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	0.66
Drainage Ditch 9	510	PUB2Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	0.43
Drainage Ditch 10	510	PEM1Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	0.09
Drainage Ditch 11	510	PEM1Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	0.02
Drainage Ditch 12	510	PUB2Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	0.78
Drainage Ditch 13	510	PUB2Jx	Upland-cut Drainage Ditch	0.01
<b>Total Drainage Ditches</b>				<b>4.81</b>
Pond 1	534	PUB2H	Upland-cut Agriculture Pond	0.06
<b>Total Ponds</b>				<b>0.06</b>
Wetland 5	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	0.06
Wetland 6	618	PSS1C	Willow	0.19
Wetland 7	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	0.03
Wetland 8	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	0.08
Wetland 9	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.07
Wetland 10	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.61
Wetland 11	510	R2UB2	Stream (Channelized)	0.04
	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.16
	<b>Sub-total Wetland 11</b>			<b>0.20</b>
Wetland 12	510	R2UB2	Stream (Channelized)	0.25
	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.15
	<b>Sub-total Wetland 12</b>			<b>0.40</b>
Wetland 13	510	R2UB2	Stream	0.15
	615	PFO1J	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.07
	<b>Sub-total Wetland 13</b>			<b>0.22</b>
Wetland 14	615	PFO1J	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.14
Wetland 15	630	PFO1C	Wetland Forested Mixed	0.52
<b>Total Wetlands</b>				<b>2.52</b>
River 2	510	R2UB2	Manatee River (open water portion)	0.17
River 3	510	R2UB2	Gamble Creek (open water portion)	0.15
<b>Total Rivers</b>				<b>0.32</b>
<b>Total Surface Waters</b>				<b>7.71</b>

<sup>1</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.



### **Wetland 6**

**FLUCFCS:** 618 – *Willow and Elderberry*

**FWS:** PSS1C (*Palustrine, Scrub-Shrub, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Seasonally Flooded*)

This is an isolated wetland located approximately 300 feet southwest of Waterline Road on the northwest side of Rye Road. This wetland is a freshwater scrub-shrub wetland dominated by Carolina willow. Brazilian pepper, saltbush, bushy broom grass, and St. Augustine grass (*Stenotaphrum secundatum*) are also present as associate species. This wetland comprises 0.19 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **Wetland 7**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways (Channelized Stream)*

**FWS:** PUB2Jx (*Palustrine, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

This is a wet ditch bisected by Rye Road approximately 320 feet southwest of 147<sup>th</sup> Street East. This ditch appears to be a channelized stream that runs perpendicular to Rye Road and eventually terminates into an unnamed tributary of the Manatee River outside of the Rye Road Alternative. On the northwest side of Rye Road, the ditch contains steep banks with sparse vegetation under a dense canopy of upland, pine/oak forest. On the southeast side of Rye Road, this ditch is not as well defined with shallow-sloped banks. Sparse wild coffee (*Psychotria* sp.) and pokeweed (*Amaranthus australis*) are present in the ditch underneath a canopy of live oak, cabbage palm, and Brazilian pepper. No water was present in the ditch during the time of the field review. This ditch comprises 0.03 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **Wetland 8**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways (Channelized Stream)*

**FWS:** PUB2Jx (*Palustrine, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

This is a wet ditch bisected by Rye Road approximately 800 feet southwest of 3<sup>rd</sup> Drive East. This ditch appears to be a channelized stream that runs perpendicular to Rye Road and eventually terminates into Wetland 9 outside of the Rye Road Alternative. On the northwest side of Rye Road, the ditch contains both steep and shallow-sloped banks with pennywort, dayflower, thistle (*Cirsium* sp.), and filamentous green algae present near the base of the slopes. A narrow stream of water was flowing from south to north during the field review. On the southeast side of Rye Road, this ditch contains steeply sloped banks with alligator weed and filamentous green algae present. The water on this side of the ditch is considerably deeper than the north side of Rye Road and appeared to be stagnant. Mosquito fish, raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) tracks, and a soft shell turtle (*Apalone ferox*) were observed within this ditch. This ditch comprises 0.08 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.



### **Drainage Ditch 6**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways*

**FWS:** PUB2Jx (*Palustrine, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

This is a wet ditch bisected by Rye Road approximately 950 feet northeast of 3<sup>rd</sup> Drive East. This ditch appears to have been excavated from upland soils and runs perpendicular to Rye Road before terminating into Wetland 9 outside of the Rye Road Alternative. On the northwest side of Rye Road, the banks of this ditch are steep and maintained free of vegetation. Laurel oak, live oak, slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*), and cabbage palm are the dominant species in the canopy overhanging this portion of the ditch. On the southeast side of Rye Road, this ditch is not well defined and contains needle palm (*Rhapidophyllum hystrix*) and cinnamon fern. The ditch passes underneath a canopy dominated by laurel oak, live oak, cabbage palm, Brazilian pepper, and wax myrtle. This ditch comprises 0.05 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **Wetland 9**

**FLUCFCS:** 615 – *Stream and Lake Swamps (Bottomland)*

**FWS:** PFO1C (*Palustrine, Forested, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Seasonally Flooded*)

This is a forested floodplain associated with a perennial stream located approximately 2,100 feet north of 3<sup>rd</sup> Drive East. The stream runs perpendicular to Rye Road before terminating in a tributary of the Manatee River outside of the Rye Road Alternative. This stream has shallow-sloped banks and contains saltbush, wax myrtle, dog fennel (*Eupatorium* sp.), soft rush, lizard's tail (*Saururus cernuus*), pickerelweed, smartweed, and primrose willow. The forested floodplain is dominated by a canopy of laurel oak, sweetbay, red maple, Carolina willow, and Brazilian pepper. No water was present within the stream system during the field review. This stream and associated floodplain comprise 0.07 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **Drainage Ditch 7**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways*

**FWS:** PEM1Jx (*Palustrine, Emergent, Persistent, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

This is a series of wet ditches located within improved pasture and a sod farm on the northwest side of Rye Road across from 167<sup>th</sup> Boulevard Northeast. The main ditch runs parallel to Rye Road for a distance of approximately 3,500 feet (0.7 miles). These ditches appear to direct water from the improved pasture near Rye Road to a creek system (Wetland 9) located to the southwest of Ditch 8. The ditches are dominated by soft rush, water hyssops, and Bahia grass (*Paspalum notatum*) and are affected by cattle grazing. This ditch system comprises 2.77 acres of the Rye Road Alternative.



### **Drainage Ditch 8**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways*

**FWS:** PUB2Jx (*Palustrine, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

This ditch is parallel to the southeast side of Rye Road near the intersection with 169<sup>th</sup> Court Northeast. This ditch has shallow-sloped banks with sparse amounts of vegetation, including water pennywort, ponyfoot (*Dichondra carolinensis*), smartweed, soft rush, and baby tears (*Micrantheum umbrosum*), which is maintained by mowing. No water was present in the ditch during the time of the field review. This ditch comprises 0.66 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **Drainage Ditch 9**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways*

**FWS:** PUB2Jx (*Palustrine, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

This is a wet ditch located on the northwest side of Rye Road approximately 700 feet northeast of 169<sup>th</sup> Court Northeast. This ditch runs parallel to Rye Road a distance of approximately 1,000 feet before terminating into an undeveloped, grassy area within the Rye Road ROW that may be part of the stormwater management system or floodplain compensation. Vegetation, including dog fennel and torpedo grass, is occasionally maintained. This ditch comprises 0.43 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **River 2**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways (Open water portion of the Manatee River)*

**FWS:** R2UB2 (*Riverine, Lower Perennial, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand*)

This is the Manatee River bisected by Rye Road between Upper Manatee River Road and Rye Wilderness Road Northeast. Within the Rye Road Alternative, the Manatee River is approximately 75-feet wide and has steeply sloped banks that are mostly unvegetated. The north bank is armored with rip rap. Along the banks of the river, signs are present that indicate high water flow fluctuations may occur with little warning due to operations of the Manatee River Dam up-river from the Rye Road Alternative. The Manatee River is not tidally influenced within this location, but the water levels may fluctuate due to tail-water events during changing tides downstream from the Rye Road Alternative. During the field review, tannin-stained water was observed flowing from east to west. The Manatee River comprises 0.17 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **Wetland 10**

**FLUCFCS:** 615 – *Stream and Lake Swamps (Bottomland)*

**FWS:** PFO1C (*Palustrine, Forested, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Seasonally Flooded*)

This is the floodplain of the Manatee River located on the west side of Rye Road between the Manatee River and Rye Wilderness Road Northeast. The canopy of this forested wetland is dominated by red maple, sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), sweetbay, water oak, and cabbage palm. Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*), saltbush, Brazilian pepper, and chain fern



(*Woodwardia virginica*) are present in the understory as associate species. This floodplain wetland comprises 0.61 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

#### **Wetland 11**

***FLUCFCS: 510 – Streams and Waterways (Channelized Stream)***

***615 – Stream and Lake Swamps (Bottomland)***

***FWS: R2UB2 (Riverine, Lower Perennial, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand)***

***PFO1C (Palustrine, Forested, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Seasonally Flooded)***

This is a channelized creek and forested floodplain bisected by Rye Road approximately 900 feet south of Rivers Reach Boulevard. On the east side of Rye Road, the creek contains wax myrtle, pickerelweed, smartweed, and water pennywort underneath an overhanging canopy dominated by laurel oak, sweetbay, red maple, water oak, and cabbage palm. The vegetation and stabilization of the creek banks on the east side of Rye Road have been affected by cattle grazing. During the field review, water was flowing from east to west. This creek and associated floodplain comprise 0.04 acre and 0.16 acre, respectively, for a total of 0.20 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

#### **Wetland 12**

***FLUCFCS: 510 – Streams and Waterways (Channelized Stream)***

***615 – Stream and Lake Swamps (Bottomland)***

***FWS: R2UB2 (Riverine, Lower Perennial, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand)***

***PFO1C (Palustrine, Forested, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Seasonally Flooded)***

This is a channelized creek and forested floodplain bisected by Rye Road approximately 800 feet north of Rivers Reach Boulevard. This creek system has steeply sloped banks with an overhanging canopy dominated by laurel oak and sweetbay. The creek banks contain Brazilian pepper, Carolina willow, wax myrtle, water pennywort, chain fern, maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*), and rattlebox (*Sesbania* sp.). The vegetation and stabilization of the creek banks on the east side of Rye Road have been affected by cattle grazing. During the field review, water was flowing from the northeast to the southwest. This creek and associated floodplain comprise 0.25 acre and 0.15 acre, respectively, for a total of 0.40 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

#### **Drainage Ditch 10**

***FLUCFCS: 510 – Streams and Waterways***

***FWS: PEM1Jx (Palustrine, Emergent, Persistent, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated)***

This ditch has been excavated from uplands approximately 800 feet north of Rivers Reach Boulevard. It is connected to Wetland 12. This ditch has steeply sloped banks and contains pennywort, chain fern, maidencane, Bahia grass, and rattlebox. During the field review, no water was observed within the ditch, which comprises 0.09 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.



### **Drainage Ditch 11**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways*

**FWS:** PEM1Jx (*Palustrine, Emergent, Persistent, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

This is a wet ditch that is perpendicular to Rye Road approximately 2,000 feet north of Rivers Reach Boulevard. This ditch continues approximately 200 feet east of the Rye Road Alternative before turning north and parallel to Rye Road behind single-family homes. Vegetation in this ditch consists of Carolina willow, Brazilian pepper, and wax myrtle. This ditch comprises 0.02 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **Wetland 13**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways (Channelized Stream)*

615 – *Stream and Lake Swamps (Bottomland)*

**FWS:** R2UB2 (*Riverine, Lower Perennial, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand*)

PFO1J (*Palustrine, Forested, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Intermittently Flooded*)

This is a channelized creek and associated floodplain bridged by Rye Road approximately 3,300 feet south of Golf Course Road. This creek system has steeply sloped banks with an overhanging canopy dominated by red maple, sweetbay, and Brazilian pepper. During the field review, stagnant water was present in the creek. The historic floodplain of this creek appears to have been affected by adjacent land uses, including cattle grazing on the east side of Rye Road and single-family residences on the west side of the road. This creek and associated floodplain comprise 0.15 acre and 0.07 acre, respectively, for a total of 0.22 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **River 3**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways (Open water portion of Gamble Creek)*

**FWS:** R2UB2 (*Riverine, Lower Perennial, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand*)

This is Gamble Creek, which is bridged by Golf Course Road approximately 950 feet east of Jim Davis Road. This creek system is approximately 100 feet wide and 12 to 18 inches deep within this alternative. It has steeply sloped banks dominated by young Carolina willow, soft rush, cattail, and pokeweed. Duckweed and hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*) were also observed in the stagnant water pockets on the north side of Golf Course Road. During the field review, water was flowing from north to south. The open water portion of Gamble Creek comprises 0.15 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **Wetland 14**

**FLUCFCS:** 615 – *Stream and Lake Swamps (Bottomland)*

**FWS:** PFO1J (*Palustrine, Forested, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Intermittently Flooded*)

This is the historic floodplain of Gamble Creek located between Jim Davis Road and Gamble Creek. The floodplain has been affected by adjacent land uses, including citrus crops and cattle grazing on the north and south sides of Golf Course Road. Multiple flow channels and evidence



of hydrology are present beneath a dense canopy of laurel oak, red maple, pop ash, and cabbage palm. The Gamble Creek floodplain comprises 0.14 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **Drainage Ditch 12**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways*

**FWS:** PUB2Jx (*Palustrine, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

This is a series of wet ditches surrounding the Gamble Creek Estates subdivision approximately 3,300 feet east of Fort Hamer Road on the north side of Golf Course Road. These ditches appear to be part of the stormwater management system of the subdivision. The ditches are dominated by herbaceous wetland vegetation, including water hyssop, soft rush, torpedo grass, cattail, pennywort, and primrose willow. The vegetation in the ditch is maintained by occasional mowing. This series of ditches comprise 0.78 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **Wetland 15**

**FLUCFCS:** 630 – *Wetland Forested Mixed*

**FWS:** PFO1C (*Palustrine, Forested, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Seasonally Flooded*)

This is a forested wetland located south of Golf Course Road and east of Fort Hamer Road. This forested wetland is the floodplain of a stream outside of the Rye Road Alternative. The canopy is dominated by laurel oak, American elm, cabbage palm, and red maple. Live oak and slash pine are sparsely located throughout this floodplain on hummocks. The understory of this floodplain is dominated by wild coffee, needle palm, chain fern, poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), green briar (*Smilax* sp.), and trumpet creeper (*Campsis radicans*). This forested wetland comprises 0.52 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **Pond 1**

**FLUCFCS:** 534 – *Reservoirs less than 10 acres*

**FWS:** PUB2H (*Palustrine, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand, Permanently Flooded*)

This is an isolated surface water located in unused pasture approximately 350 feet south of 60<sup>th</sup> Street East and 250 feet west of Fort Hamer Road. This agriculture pond is mostly open water with a littoral zone of torpedo grass and young Carolina willow. Pond 1 comprises 0.06 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.

### **Drainage Ditch 13**

**FLUCFCS:** 510 – *Streams and Waterways*

**FWS:** PUB2Jx (*Palustrine, Unconsolidated Bottom, Sand, Intermittently Flooded, Excavated*)

This is a stormwater management ditch located approximately 200 feet south of US 301 that is bisected by Fort Hamer Road. This ditch has shallow-sloped banks dominated by cinnamon fern, elderberry, and golden canna (*Canna flaccida*). Sweetbay and laurel oak are the dominant species in the overhanging canopy. This ditch comprises 0.01 acre of the Rye Road Alternative.



## ***Section 3.0***

# ***POTENTIAL WETLAND AND OTHER SURFACE WATER IMPACTS***

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This section describes the impacts to wetlands that would occur as a result of the construction and operation of each build alternative.

### ***3.1 AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION OF WETLAND IMPACTS***

Pursuant to Executive Order 11990 entitled *Protection of Wetlands*, federal actions should avoid, to the extent possible, the long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands and avoid direct or indirect support of new construction in wetlands wherever there is a practicable alternative. Unavoidable wetland impacts resulting from construction of the project would occur within each build alternative. Transportation safety standards for side slopes, turn radius, additional lanes, and widths necessitate these impacts. Impacts to wetlands are unavoidable for both the Fort Hamer Alternative and the Rye Road Alternative due to their location within the existing and proposed right-of-way (ROW) and proximity to the bridge structures for each alternative. However, potential wetland impacts have been minimized to the extent possible by incorporating the following measures:

- Within the Fort Hamer Alternative Study Area, construction of the new bridge would be at one of the narrowest places on the Manatee River. Both the eastern and western halves of the study area include a widened floodplain, shallow embayments, and extensive saltwater marsh habitats. Spanning these wetlands would require longer bridge structures and would result in greater wetland impacts compared to the proposed crossing location.
- For the Fort Hamer Alternative, the bridge supports have been consciously located outside of seagrass areas.
- With the Fort Hamer Alternative, a temporary work trestle would be used to construct the bridge, which would minimize the permanent and temporary construction impacts. Use of a trestle would alleviate the need to construct a temporary causeway through the wetlands, which would result in greater wetland impacts. The use of “top-down” construction is likely feasible; however, this methodology would require shorter span lengths and a greater number of pilings and pier support structures, which would increase permanent wetland impacts.
- For both build alternatives, no bridge abutments would be constructed in wetlands. Abutments on both the north and the south side of the river would be constructed in uplands.



- For both build alternatives, a stormwater management system would be constructed to meet state water quality criteria, thereby minimizing water quality impacts from stormwater discharges from roadway and bridge surfaces.

## 3.2 ANALYSIS OF WETLAND IMPACTS

The potential wetland impacts for each build alternative were assessed by considering the type of facility to be constructed and the extent of the project footprint (i.e., construction limits) within the alternative. For the roadway segments, all wetlands and other surface waters within the proposed ROW were considered impacted since it is likely that the roadway surface, shoulders, sidewalks, and accompanying stormwater drainage and floodplain compensation facilities would occupy the full ROW.

Direct wetland impacts include fill and shading impacts. Fill impacts result from placement of bridge piers. Vegetated wetlands within the drip-line (i.e., edge-to-edge and abutment-to-abutment) of the bridges were considered impacted by shading.

Whenever a portion of a wetland is directly impacted by new construction, the SWFWMD requires an analysis of secondary impacts in the remaining portion of the wetland to account for reduced wildlife functions within the remaining wetland. Specifically, SWFWMD guidance requires that all remaining wetland areas within 25 feet of direct impacts in areas of new ROW are considered to have secondary impacts. Conversely, an analysis of secondary impacts is not required if the entire wetland is directly impacted because there is no remaining wetland area in which secondary impacts could occur. Also, secondary impacts are not considered within existing ROW since these wetlands are already considered indirectly impacted (e.g., wetlands adjacent to an existing highway).

For the Fort Hamer Alternative, secondary impacts were considered for wetlands adjacent to the new bridge and roadway construction since no infrastructure currently exists in these areas. No secondary impacts were considered for the Rye Road Alternative since all direct impacts would occur in existing ROW adjacent to existing roadway and bridge structures.

### 3.2.1 FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE

Because a temporary work trestle may be used to construct this alternative, the potential wetland impacts have been separated into permanent and temporary impacts.

#### **Permanent Impacts**

**Table 7** summarizes the unavoidable permanent wetland impacts that would result from implementation of the Fort Hamer Alternative. A total of 3.06 acres of wetlands would be directly impacted by the construction of this alternative; this includes 2.05 acres of dredge/fill impacts and 1.01 acres of shading impacts ( $2.05 + 1.01 = 3.06$ ). An additional 1.28 acres of wetlands are considered to have secondary impacts based on SWFWMD criteria. Thus, the Fort



Hamer Alternative would result in 4.34 acres of permanent wetland impacts ( $3.06 + 1.28 = 4.34$ ). All of these impacts would require compensatory mitigation.

**TABLE 7**  
**PERMANENT WETLAND IMPACT SUMMARY – FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE**

Wetland	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>1</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>2</sup>	Description	Direct Impact Acres		Secondary Impact Acres	Total Impact Acres
				Dredge/ Fill	Shading		
Wetland 1	617	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	0.50	0.00	0.14	0.64
	631	PSS1C	Wetland Scrub	1.48	0.00	0.05	1.53
	Sub-total Wetland 1			1.98	0.00	0.19	2.17
Wetland 2	631	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	0.01	0.10	0.04	0.15
	642	E2EM1P	Saltmarsh	0.01	0.12	0.22	0.35
	Sub-total Wetland 2			0.02	0.22	0.26	0.50
Wetland 3	612	E2SS3N	Mangroves	0.01	0.05	0.05	0.11
	615	PFO1P	Stream & Lake Swamp (Bottomland)	0.01	0.21	0.22	0.44
	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	0.03	0.50	0.51	1.04
	Sub-total Wetland 3			0.05	0.76	0.78	1.59
Wetland 4	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	0.0003	0.03	0.06	0.09
	Sub-total Wetland 4			0.0003	0.03	0.06	0.09
Total				2.05	1.01	1.28	4.34

<sup>1</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.

Totals may not add due to rounding.

Shading impacts from low bridges (i.e., bridges with a height to width ratio of less than 0.7) have been shown to result in decreased vegetative growth beneath the bridge (Broome *et al.*, 2005). Approximately 48 percent of the proposed Fort Hamer Alternative bridge would have a height-to-width ratio of 0.7, including the structure over the saltmarsh surrounding the peninsula between the north and south shorelines of the river. The remaining 52 percent of the bridge would have a height-to-width ratio between 0.4 and 0.7. The extent of wetland shading for the Fort Hamer Alternative bridge would be further reduced by the north/south orientation of the bridge, which allows more sunlight beneath the bridge in the early morning and late afternoon hours.

Sparse (less than 10 percent cover) patches of widgeon grass occur beneath the proposed Fort Hamer Alternative bridge, along the north bank of the main river channel adjacent to Wetland 3. Reduced productivity of the widgeon grass is possible in this area due to shading; however, the bridge structure would be approximately 32 feet above the water surface at this location. For this reason, and because of the north/south alignment of the structure, the total impact to widgeon grass as a result of shading is expected to be *de minimis*.



## **Temporary Impacts**

It is anticipated that a temporary work trestle would be constructed across the Manatee River as part of this alternative. Design details of the trestle would be determined by the contractor (yet to be selected); however, the typical section would be designed based on the weight bearing capacity needed to support the construction equipment. A similar structure used on a recent construction project consisted of a 28-foot-wide timber deck structure supported on steel pipe pilings and steel cross-beam supports. The trestle would be constructed adjacent and parallel to the permanent, two-lane bridge and would remain in place until construction of the bridge deck is completed.

A 28-foot-wide trestle would result in 0.62 acre of temporary shading impacts to vegetated wetlands and temporary *de minimis* fill impacts to wetlands and the open water portion of the Manatee River. It is anticipated that a temporary trestle would create the least amount of impacts to the mangroves, saltmarshes, and shallow portions of the Manatee River compared to other construction methodologies. Construction and use of the temporary trestle should result in insignificant, temporary wetland impacts that would restore naturally after the structure is removed.

### **3.2.2 RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVE**

**Table 8** summarizes the permanent wetland impacts resulting from the Rye Road Alternative. A total of 2.52 acres of wetlands would be directly impacted by this alternative; this includes 2.51 acres of fill and 0.01 acre of shading impacts ( $2.51 + 0.01 = 2.52$ ). As discussed previously, no secondary wetland impacts are considered for the Rye Road Alternative.

## **3.3 UNIFORM MITIGATION ASSESSMENT METHOD**

Wetlands potentially impacted by the Fort Hamer and Rye Road Alternatives were assessed using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM) pursuant to Chapter 62-345, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). UMAM is a method developed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the Water Management Districts to determine the amount of mitigation needed to offset adverse impacts to wetlands. The methodology was designed to assess functions provided by wetlands, the amount that those functions are reduced by a proposed impact, and the amount of mitigation necessary to offset the proposed functional losses. This method is also used to determine the degree of improvement in ecological value that would be created by mitigation activities. In Florida, the USACE has also adopted UMAM for assessment of wetland impacts and mitigation.

**TABLE 8**  
**PERMANENT WETLAND IMPACT SUMMARY – RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVE**

Wetland	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>1</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>2</sup>	Description	Direct Impact Acres		Total Impact Acres
				Fill	Shading	
Wetland 5	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	0.06	0.00	0.06
Wetland 6	618	PSS1C	Willow	0.19	0.00	0.19
Wetland 7	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	0.03	0.00	0.03
Wetland 8	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	0.08	0.00	0.08
Wetland 9	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.07	0.00	0.07
Wetland 10	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.60	0.01	0.61
Wetland 11	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1C	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.20	0.00	0.20
Wetland 12	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1C	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.40	0.00	0.40
Wetland 13	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1J	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.22	0.00	0.22
Wetland 14	615	PFO1J	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.14	0.00	0.14
Wetland 15	630	PFO1C	Wetland Forested Mixed	0.52	0.00	0.52
<b>Total</b>				<b>2.51</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>2.52</b>

<sup>1</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.

The UMAM assessment includes a Qualitative Characterization (Part 1) as well as a Quantitative Assessment and Scoring (Part 2). The Qualitative Assessment is a basin descriptor of the site being evaluated. The variables described include the following:

- Significant nearby features,
- Water classifications,
- Assessment area size,
- Hydrology and relationship to contiguous off-site wetlands,
- Uniqueness of the assessment area,
- Functions of the assessment area, and
- Wildlife utilization.



The Quantitative Assessment provides a score of the assessment area in both the current condition and theoretical “with impact” condition. The assessment scoring evaluates the following parameters:

- Location and landscape support,
- Water environment, and
- Vegetative community.

For this study, UMAM scores were developed for each wetland potentially affected by the alternatives being considered. **Table 9** shows the representative UMAM scores for the fill/shade impacts and **Table 10** shows the UMAM scores for the secondary impacts. The difference between the existing condition (current) scores and the proposed condition (with) scores for each wetland is then multiplied by the impact acreage to derive the estimated value of functions to fish and wildlife lost as a result of construction and operation of the alternative (**Tables 11 and 12**).

Please note that these calculations are only estimates and are based on existing conditions. The UMAM scores and values presented in Tables 9 through 12 are subject to agency review and may change during the state and federal permitting process.

**Table 13** summarizes the wetland impacts and UMAM functional loss for each build alternative. A total of 4.34 acres of unavoidable wetland impacts for the Fort Hamer Alternative would require mitigation. As shown in Table 13, these 4.34 acres of wetland impacts would result in a UMAM functional loss of 1.60.

The Rye Road Alternative would impact a total of 2.52 acres of wetlands and have a functional loss of 1.28.

It is important to note that all UMAM scores would need to be reviewed and approved by the SWFWMD and USACE and are subject to change during the permitting process.

**TABLE 9**  
**REPRESENTATIVE UMAM SCORES<sup>1</sup> FOR WETLANDS (FOR PERMANENT FILL/SHADE IMPACTS)**

Wetland	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>2</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>3</sup>	Description	Location and Landscape Support		Water Environment		Community Structure		Score (sum/30)		Delta
				Current	With	Current	With	Current	With	Current	With	
Fort Hamer Alternative												
Wetland 1 <sup>4</sup>	617 (Fill)	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	4	0	7	0	8	0	0.63	0	0.63
	631 (Fill)	PSS1C	Wetland Scrub	4	0	6	0	7	0	0.57	0	0.57
Wetland 2	631 (Fill)	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	6	0	4	0	4	0	0.47	0	0.47
	631 (Shade)			6	5	4	3	4	0	0.47	0.27	0.20
	642 (Fill)	E2EM1P	Saltmarsh	6	0	8	0	7	0	0.70	0	0.70
	642 (Shade)			6	5	8	7	7	0	0.70	0.40	0.30
Wetland 3	612 (Fill)	E2SS3N	Mangroves	7	0	8	0	8	0	0.77	0	0.77
	612 (Shade)			7	6	8	6	8	0	0.77	0.40	0.37
	615 (Fill)	PFO1P	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	7	0	8	0	7	0	0.73	0	0.73
	615 (Shade)			7	6	8	6	7	0	0.73	0.40	0.33
	642 (Fill)	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	7	0	8	0	8	0	0.77	0	0.77
	642 (Shade)			7	6	8	6	8	0	0.77	0.40	0.37
Wetland 4	642 (Fill)	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh (Shoreline)	5	0	8	0	6	0	0.63	0	0.63
	642 (Shade)			5	4	8	7	6	0	0.63	0.37	0.27
Rye Road Alternative												
Wetland 5	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	5	4	7	6	4	0	0.53	0.33	0.20
Wetland 6	618	PSS1C	Willow	3	0	5	0	5	0	0.43	0.00	0.43
Wetland 7	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	5	4	4	3	4	0	0.43	0.23	0.20
Wetland 8	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	5	4	7	6	6	0	0.60	0.33	0.27
Wetland 9	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	5	4	4	3	7	0	0.53	0.23	0.30
Wetland 10	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	7	0	7	0	7	0	0.70	0.00	0.70
Wetland 11	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1C	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	3	2	7	6	7	0	0.57	0.27	0.30
Wetland 12	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1C	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	3	2	7	6	7	0	0.57	0.27	0.30

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**TABLE 9 (CONTINUED)**  
**REPRESENTATIVE UMAM SCORES<sup>1</sup> FOR WETLANDS (FOR PERMANENT FILL/SHADE IMPACTS)**

Wetland	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>2</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>3</sup>	Description	Location and Landscape Support		Water Environment		Community Structure		Score (sum/30)		Delta
				Current	With	Current	With	Current	With	Current	With	
Wetland 13	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1J	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	3	2	6	5	6	0	0.50	0.23	0.27
Wetland 14	615	PFO1J	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	7	0	7	0	6	0	0.67	0.00	0.67
Wetland 15	630	PFO1C	Wetland Forested Mixed	7	0	8	0	7	0	0.73	0.00	0.73

<sup>1</sup> UMAM scores have not been approved by permitting agencies and are subject to change during the permitting process.

<sup>2</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.

<sup>4</sup> Assumes no mitigation required for impacts to open water portion of Wetland 1 (FLUCFCS 530 – Pond) because this pond is being incorporated into the proposed surface water management system. No mitigation is required for shading to unvegetated open surface waters.

**TABLE 10**  
**REPRESENTATIVE UMAM SCORES<sup>1</sup> FOR WETLANDS (FOR SECONDARY IMPACTS)**

Wetland	FLUCFCS <sup>2</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>3</sup>	Description	Location & Landscape Support		Water Environment		Community Structure		Score (sum/30)		Delta
				Current	With	Current	With	Current	With	Current	With	
Wetland 1	617	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	4	3	7	7	8	8	0.63	0.60	0.03
	631	PSS1C	Wetland Scrub	4	3	6	6	7	7	0.57	0.54	0.03
Wetland 2	631	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	6	5	4	4	4	4	0.46	0.43	0.04
	642	E2EM1P	Saltmarsh	6	5	8	8	7	7	0.70	0.67	0.03
Wetland 3	612	E2SS3N	Mangroves	7	6	8	8	8	8	0.77	0.73	0.04
	615	PFO1P	Stream & Lake Swamp (Bottomland)	7	6	8	8	7	7	0.73	0.70	0.03
	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	7	6	8	8	8	8	0.77	0.73	0.04
Wetland 4	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh (Shoreline)	5	4	8	8	6	6	0.63	0.60	0.03

<sup>1</sup> UMAM scores have not been approved by permitting agencies and are subject to change during the permitting process.

<sup>2</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.



**TABLE 11**  
**UMAM SUMMARY FOR PERMANENT DREDGE/FILL/SHADE WETLAND IMPACTS**

Wetland	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>1</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>2</sup>	Description	Delta	Impact Acres	Functional Loss
Fort Hamer Alternative						
Wetland 1	617	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	0.63 fill	0.50	0.32
	631	PSS1C	Wetland Scrub	0.57 fill	1.48	0.84
	Sub-total – Wetland 1				1.98	1.16
Wetland 2	631	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	0.47 fill 0.20 shade	0.009 0.103	0.004 0.021
	642	E2EM1P	Saltmarsh	0.70 fill 0.30 shade	0.009 0.116	0.006 0.035
	Sub-total – Wetland 2				0.24	0.07
Wetland 3	612	E2SS3N	Mangroves	0.77 fill 0.37 shade	0.005 0.054	0.004 0.020
	615	PFO1P	Stream & Lake Swamp (Bottomland)	0.73 fill 0.33 shade	0.009 0.214	0.007 0.071
	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	0.77 fill 0.37 shade	0.034 0.497	0.026 0.184
	Sub-total – Wetland 3				0.81	0.31
Wetland 4	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh (Shoreline)	0.63 fill 0.27 shade	0.0003 0.027	0.0002 0.007
	Sub-total – Wetland 4				0.03	0.01
Total – Fort Hamer Alternative					3.06	1.56
Rye Road Alternative						
Wetland 5	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	0.20	0.06	0.01
Wetland 6	618	PSS1C	Willow	0.43	0.19	0.08
Wetland 7	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	0.20	0.03	0.01
Wetland 8	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	0.27	0.08	0.02
Wetland 9	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.30	0.07	0.02
Wetland 10	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.70	0.61	0.43
Wetland 11	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1C	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.30	0.20	0.06

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**TABLE 11 (CONTINUED)**  
**UMAM SUMMARY FOR PERMANENT DREDGE/FILL/SHADE WETLAND IMPACTS**

<b>Wetland</b>	<b>FLUCFCS Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>FWS Classification<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Delta</b>	<b>Impact Acres</b>	<b>Functional Loss</b>
Wetland 12	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1C	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.30	0.40	0.12
Wetland 13	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1J	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.27	0.22	0.06
Wetland 14	615	PFO1J	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.67	0.14	0.09
Wetland 15	630	PFO1C	Wetland Forested Mixed	0.73	0.52	0.38
<b>Total Functional Loss – Rye Road Alternative</b>					<b>2.52</b>	<b>1.28</b>

<sup>1</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.



**TABLE 12**  
**UMAM SUMMARY FOR FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE SECONDARY WETLAND IMPACTS**

Wetland	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>1</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>2</sup>	Description	Delta	Impact Acres	Functional Loss
Wetland 1	617	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	0.03	0.14	0.004
	631	PSS1C	Wetland Scrub	0.03	0.046	0.001
	Sub-total – Wetland 1				0.19	0.005
Wetland 2	631	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	0.03	0.036	0.001
	642	E2EM1P	Saltmarsh	0.03	0.215	0.006
	Sub-total – Wetland 2				0.25	0.007
Wetland 3	612	E2SS3N	Mangroves	0.04	0.054	0.002
	615	PFO1P	Stream & Lake Swamp (Bottomland)	0.03	0.219	0.007
	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	0.04	0.508	0.02
	Sub-total – Wetland 3				0.78	0.03
Wetland 4	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh (Shoreline)	0.03	0.063	0.002
	Sub-total – Wetland 4				0.06	0.002
Totals (rounded)					1.28	0.04

<sup>1</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.

**TABLE 13**  
**WETLAND IMPACTS AND UMAM FUNCTIONAL LOSS**

<b>Wetland</b>	<b>Fill/Shade</b>		<b>Secondary</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Functional Loss</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Functional Loss</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Functional Loss</b>
<b>Fort Hamer Alternative</b>						
Wetland 1	1.98	1.16	0.19	0.005	2.17	1.16
Wetland 2	0.24	0.07	0.25	0.007	0.49	0.08
Wetland 3	0.81	0.32	0.78	0.03	1.59	0.34
Wetland 4	0.03	0.01	0.06	0.002	0.09	0.01
<b>Totals (rounded)</b>	<b>3.06</b>	<b>1.56</b>	<b>1.28</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>4.34</b>	<b>1.60</b>
<b>Rye Road Alternative</b>						
Wetland 5	0.06	0.01	No Secondary Impacts for Rye Road Alternative		0.06	0.01
Wetland 6	0.19	0.08			0.19	0.08
Wetland 7	0.03	0.01			0.03	0.01
Wetland 8	0.08	0.02			0.08	0.02
Wetland 9	0.07	0.02			0.07	0.02
Wetland 10	0.61	0.43			0.61	0.43
Wetland 11	0.20	0.06			0.20	0.06
Wetland 12	0.40	0.12			0.40	0.12
Wetland 13	0.22	0.06			0.21	0.06
Wetland 14	0.14	0.09			0.14	0.09
Wetland 15	0.52	0.38			0.52	0.38
<b>Totals (rounded)</b>	<b>2.52</b>	<b>1.28</b>			<b>2.52</b>	<b>1.28</b>

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding.

## ***Section 4.0***

# ***ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT***

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### ***4.1 INTRODUCTION***

The *Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act*, as amended through October 11, 1996 (MSFCMA), requires the regional Fishery Management Councils and the Secretary of Commerce to describe and identify Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for species under federal Fishery Management Plans. EFH is defined in the MSFCMA as “those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity.” The term “fish” includes finfish, crabs, shrimp, and lobsters in the Gulf of Mexico region. On April 23, 1997 [62 Federal Register (FR) 19723], the National Marine Fishery Service (NMFS) issued proposed regulations containing guidelines for the description and identification of EFH in fishery management plans, adverse impacts on EFH, and actions to conserve and enhance EFH. These rules were revised and finalized on January 22, 2002 (67 FR 2343). The regulations also provide a process for NMFS to coordinate and consult with federal and state agencies on activities that may adversely affect EFH. The purpose of the rule is to assist in describing and identifying EFH, minimize adverse effects on EFH, and identify other actions to conserve and enhance EFH. The purpose of the coordination and consultation provisions is to specify procedures for adequate consultation with NMFS on activities that may adversely affect EFH.

### ***4.2 PREVIOUS EFH CONSULTATION***

A new crossing of the Manatee River at Fort Hamer Road and Upper Manatee River Road was previously studied by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the FDOT from 1999 through 2006. In August 1999, as part of the NEPA documentation for the FHWA/FDOT study, the NMFS provided information that specific wetlands in the project area were identified as EFH. In August 2001, in their response to the draft WER for the FDOT project, the NMFS noted that the WER adequately described the fishery resources and habitats in the project area and adequately described the potential adverse impacts associated with the Proposed Action. The NMFS also noted that the WER identified shading impacts to vegetated wetlands but that the FDOT anticipated providing mitigation only for filling of wetlands. In their Preliminary EFH Conservation Recommendation, the NMFS stated that compensatory mitigation should be provided for lost and reduced wetland functions resulting from filling and shading. Copies of correspondence from the NMFS for the FHWA/FDOT Fort Hamer Bridge project are contained in Appendix C.

### ***4.3 CURRENT EFH COORDINATION***

In July 2010, the USCG provided the NMFS with a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare the EIS for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge and NMFS was invited to be a cooperating agency for the EIS preparation (75 FR 39555). The NMFS responded that they were unable to be a cooperating



agency but would participate in meetings, field investigations, and review of project documents (see correspondence in Appendix C). The Draft EIS (DEIS) for the proposed action was released for public review on July 5, 2013. A copy of the WER was provided as Appendix D of the DEIS. On July 24, 2013, the USCG initiated MSFCMA consultation with the NMFS.

On August 8, 2013 the NMFS responded with comments on the DEIS and WER and requested additional information for NMFS' review. In emails dated August 27 and 29, 2013, the NMFS requested additional information regarding project-related impacts to estuarine resources. In a letter dated September 18, 2013, the USCG provided responses to the NMFS' comments. On October 2, 2013 the NMFS requested additional information regarding project impacts and construction methodology. A response to this request was provided to NMFS on October 9, 2013. On December 16, 2013, the NMFS issued a concurrence letter to the USCG, thus concluding MSFCMA consultation. Copies of correspondence with the NMFS are included in Appendix C.

#### **4.4      *EXISTING EFH RESOURCES***

The Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council (GMFMC) separates EFH into marine and estuarine components. In marine waters of the Gulf of Mexico, EFH is defined as all marine waters and substrates (mud, sand, shell, rock, hardbottom, and associated biological communities) from the shoreline to the seaward limit of the Exclusive Economic Zone. For the estuarine component, EFH is defined as all estuarine waters and substrates (mud, sand, shell, rock, and associated biological communities), including the sub-tidal vegetation (seagrasses and algae) and adjacent inter-tidal vegetation (marshes and mangroves) (GMFMC, 1998). Thus, all tidal waters and substrates within the Manatee River and adjoining wetlands, including inter-tidal zones, are considered estuarine EFH by the GMFMC.

Specific EFH within the Fort Hamer Alternative includes Wetland 2, Wetland 3, Wetland 4, and River 1 (the Manatee River). As previously described, these wetlands and surface waters contain a mixture of scrub-shrub, creeks, mangrove swamps, stream and lake swamps, saltwater marshes, exotic wetland hardwoods, and open water (riverine) habitats. Several fish, mollusk, and other invertebrate species may use this EFH as juveniles or adults and several species may require low-salinity habitats such as needlerush marshes and oligohaline creeks during early life history stages. Submerged aquatic vegetation and shallow sub-tidal areas have also been identified as important nursery and foraging habitat for a number of economically important species including spotted seatrout (*Cynoscion nebulosus*), snook (*Centropomus undecimalis*), and red drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*).

The Rye Road Alternative is located approximately 4 miles east (upstream) of the Fort Hamer Alternative. The open water portions of the Manatee River (River 2) and adjacent wetlands (Wetland 10) within the Rye Road Alternative are freshwater; however, daily water elevations may be affected by tidally influenced, tailwater events downstream of this location. No EFH is present within this alternative, but it is located upstream from EFH that has been identified by

NMFS as important nursery and foraging habitat for a number of economically important fish species.

The GMFMC has identified and described EFH for 55 representative managed species and the coral complex. Species accounts of each of the 55 representative managed species and the coral complex were reviewed to assess the potential occurrence of these species within the Fort Hamer Alternative Study Area during any stage of their life cycle. **Table 14** lists each of these species and its potential to occur in the Fort Hamer Alternative Study Area. Of the 55 representative fish, shrimp, and crab species listed by the GMFMC, three are considered to have a high potential to occur within the study area. These are the pink shrimp (*Penaeus duorarum*), red drum, and gray snapper (*Lutjanus griseus*). The remaining 52 representative species and the coral complex are considered to have a low to no potential to occur within the study area.

**TABLE 14**  
**GULF OF MEXICO EFH – MANAGED SPECIES<sup>1</sup>**  
**POTENTIAL OCCURRENCE WITHIN THE FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE STUDY AREA**

<b>Fishery Management Plan</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Potential Occurrence Within Study Area<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Comments</b>
Shrimp	Brown shrimp ( <i>Farfantepenaeus aztecus</i> )	None	More common in central and western Gulf of Mexico.
	White shrimp ( <i>Litopenaeus setiferus</i> )	None	More common in central and western Gulf of Mexico.
	Pink shrimp ( <i>F. duorarum</i> )	High	Occurs throughout Tampa Bay/Boca Ciega Bay.
	Royal red shrimp ( <i>Pleoticus robustus</i> )	None	An off-shore/deep-water species (180 – 730 meters).
Red Drum	<i>Sciaenops ocellatus</i>	High	Occurs throughout Tampa Bay and the Manatee River.
Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources	King mackerel ( <i>Scomberomorus cavalla</i> )	None	An off-shore species.
	Spanish mackerel ( <i>S. maculatus</i> )	Low	An off-shore or near shore species; juveniles may inhabit estuarine areas but are not estuarine-dependent.
	Cobia ( <i>Rachycentron canadum</i> )	Low	An off-shore/deep-water species; juveniles may inhabit estuarine areas but are not estuarine-dependent.
Stone Crab	Florida stone crab ( <i>Menippe mercenaria</i> )	Low	Prefers higher salinities.
	Gulf stone crab ( <i>M. adina</i> )	Low	Prefers higher salinities.
Spiny Lobster	Spiny lobster ( <i>Panulirus argus</i> )	None	Preferred habitat is off-shore coral reefs and seagrasses.
	Slippery lobster ( <i>Scyllarides nodife</i> )	None	Preferred habitat is off-shore coral reefs.
Coral and Coral Reef	Multiple groups/species	None	Potential for scattered specimens.

*Continued on next page*



**TABLE 14 (CONTINUED)**  
**GULF OF MEXICO EFH – MANAGED SPECIES<sup>1</sup>**  
**POTENTIAL OCCURRENCE WITHIN THE FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE STUDY AREA**

<b>Fishery Management Plan</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Potential Occurrence Within Study Area<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Comments</b>
Reef Fish	Red grouper ( <i>Epinephelus morio</i> )	None	Generally an off-shore species.
	Black grouper ( <i>Mycteroperca bonaci</i> )	None	Generally an off-shore species.
	Gag grouper ( <i>M. microlepis</i> )	Low	Prefer high salinities.
	Scamp ( <i>M. phenax</i> )	None	Prefer deeper waters (12 – 189 meters).
	Red snapper ( <i>Lutjanus campechanus</i> )	None	Prefer deeper waters (17 – 200 meters).
	Vermillion snapper ( <i>Rhomboplites aurorubens</i> )	None	Prefer deeper waters (20 – 200 meters).
	Gray snapper ( <i>L. griseus</i> )	High	Postlarvae and juvenile found in most estuarine habitats.
	Yellowtail snapper ( <i>Ocyurus chrysurus</i> )	None	Little information available. Juveniles found in <i>Thalassia</i> beds and mangrove roots.
	Lane snapper ( <i>L. synagris</i> )	None	Found in mangrove and grassy estuarine areas.
Reef Fish (continued)	Greater amberjack ( <i>Seriola dumerili</i> )	None	An off-shore species.
	Lesser amberjack ( <i>S. fasciata</i> )	None	An off-shore species.
	Tilefish ( <i>Lopholatilus chamaeleonticeps</i> )	None	An off-shore/deep-water species.
	Gray triggerfish ( <i>Balistes capriscus</i> )	None	An off-shore species.

<sup>1</sup> GMFMC, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Ratings are None, Low, and High and are based on habitat suitability and species' range as follows:

None – Suitable habitat does not occur within the study area. The species is commonly known to not exist in the area.

Low – Marginally suitable habitat exists within the study area, and the study area is within the species' range, or, suitable habitat exists within the study area; however, the study area is at the edge of the species' range.

High – Suitable habitat exists within the study area, and the study area is within the species' range. The species is commonly known to exist in the area.

None of the 55 representative managed species and coral complex has the potential to occur within the Rye Road Alternative Study Area due to its freshwater component (i.e., lack of saltwater and estuarine habitats).

## 4.5 **POTENTIAL EFH IMPACTS**

As described previously, Wetlands 2, 3, 4, and River 1 (Manatee River) within the Fort Hamer Alternative qualify as EFH. As shown in **Table 15**, the Fort Hamer Alternative would impact 0.16 acre of EFH due to fill and 1.01 acres of vegetated EFH due to shading. The Rye Road Alternative would not affect habitats designated as EFH.

**TABLE 15**  
**EFH IMPACT SUMMARY – FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE**

Wetland	FLUCFCS <sup>1</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>2</sup>	Description	Impact Type	Wetland Impact (Acres)
Wetland 2	631	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	Shading Fill	0.10 0.01
	642	E2EM1P	Saltmarsh	Shading Fill	0.12 0.01
	Sub-total Wetland 2				0.24
Wetland 3	612	E2SS3N	Mangroves	Shading Fill	0.05 0.01
	615	PF01P	Stream and Lake Swamp (Bottomland)	Shading Fill	0.21 0.01
	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	Shading Fill	0.50 0.03
	Sub-total Wetland 3				0.81
Wetland 4	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh (Shoreline)	Shading Fill	0.03 0.0003
	Sub-total Wetland 4				0.03
River 1a	510	E1UB2L	Manatee River (Open Water)	Shading Fill	0.06 0.06
River 1b	510	E1UB2L	Manatee (Open Water)	Fill	0.03
	Sub-total Rivers 1a and 1b				0.15
Total Impacts					1.23

<sup>1</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding.

#### **4.5.1 FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE**

The presence of bridge pilings/footings within the wetlands and open water portion of the Manatee River would result in 0.16 acre of fill. These impacts are not expected to adversely affect populations of red drum, gray snapper, pink shrimp, stone crab, and their prey populations.

A total of 1.01 acres of Wetlands 2, 3, and 4 would be subjected to permanent shading impacts from the bridge (all of which qualifies as designated EFH). These impacts would not affect the hydrology of the affected wetlands but may result in a decrease of vegetation and secondary productivity beneath the bridge. As stated previously, approximately 48 percent of the structure would have a height-width ratio of 0.7 or greater, including that portion of the structure over the saltmarsh and mangroves in Wetland 3. The mid-point of the bridge, and consequently the highest part of the bridge, occurs over these marsh/mangrove habitats and allows stormwater to flow in equal volumes from the bridge to the stormwater ponds located at each end of the structure. Thus, 75 percent of the total permanent shading area (0.76 acre of the 1.01 acres) occurs beneath that portion of the bridge with a height-width ratio of 0.7 or greater. The remaining 25 percent of shading area (0.25 acre) occurs beneath portions of the bridge with a height-width ratio of less than 0.7.



Broome *et al.* (2005) reported that above-ground biomass, stem height, stem count, number of flowers, and basal area were greatly reduced beneath bridges at height-width ratios less than 0.5. At a height-width ratio of 0.68 adverse bridge shading effects on vegetation were still detected although greatly diminished. Likewise, they showed a strong correlation of bridge height-width ratio with secondary productivity with benthic invertebrate density and diversity significantly lower beneath bridges with a height-width ratio less than 0.7. Broome *et al.* (2005) concluded: “Data indicates that shading by bridges having height-width ratios greater than 0.7 do not adversely impact the productivity or function of the underlying marsh...” Based on this analysis, the 0.25 acre of permanent shading area beneath the proposed bridge would be expected to result in reduced productivity and ecological function beneath the bridge. The remaining 0.76 acre of shading would have minimally reduced productivity and function. Shading impacts beneath the bridge may be further reduced due to the north-south orientation of the bridge; more sunlight will be present under the bridge during the morning and late afternoon hours compared to a bridge with an east-west axis. Based on this information, we conclude that the 1.01 acres of permanent shading beneath the bridge will have minimal adverse effects to red drum, gray snapper, pink shrimp, and stone crab populations and their prey species.

The temporary work trestle described previously would result in 0.62 acre of temporary shading impacts to wetlands. These impacts are expected to be minimal and should restore naturally following removal of the structure.

Water quality degradation could affect designated EFH within the Fort Hamer Alternative Study Area. To minimize potential water quality impacts, the project would be constructed in accordance with all permit conditions for maintaining water quality during construction and during operation of the facility. All stormwater runoff from the roadway and bridge structure would be directed to stormwater treatment ponds; no stormwater runoff would be directly discharged to the Manatee River or adjacent wetlands. For these reasons, no water quality induced adverse impacts to EFH or EFH-dependent species are anticipated for the Fort Hamer Alternative.

#### **4.5.2 RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVE**

The Rye Road Alternative would not have direct fill or shading impacts to EFH; however, water quality degradation could affect downstream habitats designated as EFH. Currently, little to no stormwater treatment occurs for the roadways that comprise the Rye Road Alternative. However, currently state permitting criteria require the construction and maintenance of a stormwater conveyance and treatment system for new impervious roadway areas. Locations and other details of the stormwater treatment system would be developed during project design if this alternative were advanced. To minimize potential water quality impacts, this alternative would be constructed in accordance with all permit conditions for maintaining water quality during construction and operation of the facility. All stormwater runoff from the roadway and bridge structures would be directed to stormwater treatment ponds; no stormwater runoff would be directly discharged to the Manatee River or adjacent wetlands. For these reasons, no water quality induced adverse impacts to EFH or EFH-dependent species are anticipated for the Rye Road Alternative.

## *Section 5.0*

# *CONCEPTUAL MITIGATION*

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Both the Fort Hamer Alternative and the Rye Road Alternative would result in unavoidable wetland impacts to freshwater and/or estuarine wetland habitats. Regardless of the build alternative ultimately constructed, wetland impacts resulting from construction of the project are required to be mitigated to satisfy all mitigation requirements of United States Code (U.S.C.) 1344 and Part IV, Chapter 373 Florida Statutes (F.S.). The mitigation would need to be sufficient to offset the UMAM functional loss resulting from the wetland impacts and to offset the loss of value and functions resulting from impacts to EFH.

At present, there are no permitted wetland mitigation banks or in-lieu fee program serving the study area of either build alternative; therefore, mitigation through these options is not available. For this reason, a conceptual mitigation plan was created to offset the unavoidable impacts to wetlands that would result from construction of either build alternative. However, the status of available mitigation banks and mitigation credits would be reassessed as this project moves forward into design and permitting.

Conceptual mitigation for either build alternative consists of the creation of wetland habitats. The primary mitigation area is located within a 229-acre vacant parcel of land known as the Hidden Harbor Tract on the north side of the river and east of Fort Hamer Road. This site is located approximately 3,700 feet east of the Fort Hamer Park (**Figure 9**). The area had been in agricultural cultivation until 2004 when it was purchased by the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners. The site has not been planted with row crops since the purchase, but is maintained by occasional mowing activities.

The area to be converted for wetland mitigation is currently fallow crop land that was previously used for growing tomatoes. Bed rows are still visible and dominated by cogon grass (*Imperata cylindrical*). Associate species observed in this area include saltbush, bushy broomsedge (*Andropogon glomeratus*), rattlebox (*Sesban* spp.), and docks (*Rumex* spp.).

In its current state, the proposed mitigation site provides little habitat for wildlife. Feral hogs were observed in the fallow crop land and several species of avian raptors were observed flying overhead; however, the fields do not provide the diversity of habitats preferred by most species. Once the proposed mitigation is constructed, a mosaic of habitats would be available for wading birds, amphibians, reptiles, and other wetland-dependent species.

Hydrology on the site is maintained by rainfall, except for a small portion on the northeast side of the mitigation site, which borders an unnamed tributary to Gamble Creek. A shallow tidal overflow from this tributary enters the proposed mitigation site at this location and would be incorporated into the mitigation design.



Path: I:\Projects\12009385\_Hamer Bridge Manatee River\Applications\mxd\March 2013\Fort Hamer Mitigation Areas.mxd



**Legend**

- Construction Limits
- Mitigation Areas

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011

Figure 9  
Conceptual Mitigation Areas  
Fort Hamer Alternative  
Manatee County, FL



0 450 900  
Feet

## **5.1 FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE**

The conceptual wetland mitigation for the Fort Hamer Alternative consists of three mitigation areas (Mitigation Areas A, B, and C). Mitigation Area A is located on the south side of the Manatee River immediately adjacent to Wetland 2 and east of the proposed roadway and bridge approach. The area to be converted for wetland mitigation is predominantly disturbed oak hammock dominated by live oak and Brazilian pepper. Mitigation activities to be performed in this area include creation of approximately 0.3 acre of tidal saltmarsh that is hydrologically connected to Wetland 2 and the Manatee River. The area would be excavated below the mean high water elevation and planted with black needle rush and leather fern.

Mitigation Area B is located in the Hidden Harbor site on the north side of the river. In Mitigation Area B, 0.2 acre of mangrove wetland and 1.8 acres of saltmarsh would be created by excavating uplands to approximately 1.5 feet below the mean high water elevation and hydrologically connecting it to the tidal portion of an unnamed tributary of Gamble Creek. Red and black mangroves would be planted in a zone between the tidal creek and saltmarsh. The saltmarsh portion of this wetland would be intertidal and planted with species adapted for oligohaline conditions, including black needlerush and leather fern. The saltmarsh would also contain a sub-tidal pool, which would hold approximately 12 to 14 inches of water at low tide.

Mitigation Area C is also located in the Hidden Harbor site adjacent to Mitigation Area B. Mitigation Area C would consist of 2.2 acres of mixed, forested wetland hardwoods created by excavating uplands to 6 inches below the seasonal high groundwater elevation and hydrologically connecting it to upstream freshwater flow from an unnamed tributary of Gamble Creek. At seasonal high water, the mitigation area would hold approximately 6 inches of water. The mixed wetland hardwoods mitigation site would be planted with laurel oak, American elm, and red maple. A transitional boundary between uplands and wetlands would be planted with buttonbush, wax myrtle, and saltbush.

## **5.2 RYE ROAD ALTERNATIVE**

Proposed mitigation activities at the Hidden Harbor site for the Rye Road Alternative include the construction of approximately 3.4 acres of mixed, forested wetland hardwoods at Mitigation Area C. The mixed wetland hardwoods would be created by excavating uplands to approximately 6 inches below the seasonal high groundwater elevation and hydrologically connecting it to upstream freshwater flow from the unnamed tributary of Gamble Creek. At seasonal high water, the mitigation area would hold approximately 6 inches of water. The mixed wetland hardwoods mitigation site would be planted with laurel oak, American elm, and red maple. A transitional boundary between uplands and wetlands would be planted with buttonbush, wax myrtle, and saltbush.



### **5.3      *CONCEPTUAL MITIGATION SUMMARY***

Construction of the Fort Hamer Alternative would result in a total of 4.34 acres of wetland impacts requiring compensatory mitigation. These impacts include 2.05 acres of fill, 1.01 acres of shading, and 1.28 acres of secondary impacts. The conceptual mitigation for these impacts consists of the creation of 4.5 acres of wetlands, including mangrove wetland, saltmarsh, and mixed forested hardwood wetlands.

Construction of the Rye Road Alternative would result in 2.51 acres of fill and 0.01 acre of shading impacts requiring compensatory mitigation. The conceptual mitigation for these impacts consists of the creation of 3.4 acres of mixed forested hardwood wetlands.

Details of the wetland mitigation plan and UMAM functional gain resulting from the mitigation sites would be developed during the state and federal permitting process and are subject to review and approval by the permitting and commenting agencies. As a result, the final size and design of the mitigation wetlands to be constructed may change during the permitting process.

## *Section 6.0*

# ***WETLANDS PERMITTING AND COORDINATION***

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Both state and federal agencies regulate impacts to surface waters (including wetlands) in Florida. These agencies include the USACE, SWFWMD, and FDEP. Other agencies, including the NMFS, FWS, EPA, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), review and comment on environmental permit applications. In addition, the FDEP regulates stormwater discharges from construction sites, and the USCG regulates bridge construction over navigable waters. It is anticipated that the following permits would be required for construction of either the Fort Hamer Alternative or the Rye Road Alternative:

- USCG Bridge Permit
- USACE Section 404 Dredge and Fill Permit
- SWFWMD Environmental Resource Permit
- FDEP National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit

Coordination of the project was initiated on July 9, 2010 with the publication of NOI to prepare an EIS in the Federal Register. On July 20, 2010, the USCG invited the USACE and NMFS to participate as cooperating agencies for the EIS. The USACE responded that they agree to be a cooperating agency. The NMFS declined to be a cooperating agency due to manpower limitations. Copies of these correspondences are provided in Appendix C. Additional coordination of the project would be accomplished through the submittal of this document to the USACE, NMFS, FWS, and SWFWMD agencies.

The complexity of the permitting process would depend on the degree of the impact to jurisdictional areas. An individual permit would likely be required from the USACE. An individual permit requires compliance with the 404(b)(1) guidelines, including verification that all impacts have first been avoided to the greatest extent possible, that unavoidable impacts been minimized to the greatest extent possible, and lastly that unavoidable impacts have been mitigated in the form of wetlands creation, restoration, and/or enhancement.

The SWFWMD requires an Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) when construction of any project results in the creation of a new, or modification of an existing, surface water management system or results in impacts to waters of the state or isolated wetlands. In addition to potential wetland impacts, SWFWMD reviews water quality issues relating to the operation of the proposed project and water quantity attenuation resulting from project-related changes in land use. As with USACE permits, the complexity associated with the ERP permitting process would



depend on the size of the project and/or the extent of wetland impacts. Based on the findings in this report, an Individual ERP would be required by SWFWMD.

Federal law 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 122 prohibits point source discharges of stormwater associated with industrial activity, including certain construction activities pursuant to 40 CFR 122.26(b)(14)(x), to waters of the U.S. without a NPDES permit. Under the State of Florida's delegated authority to administer the NPDES program, applicants that have stormwater discharge associated with construction activity to surface waters of the state must file for and obtain either coverage under an appropriate generic permit contained in Chapter 62-621, F.A.C., or an individual permit issued pursuant to Chapter 62-620, F.A.C. A major component of the NPDES permit is the development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP identifies potential sources of pollution that may reasonably be expected to affect the quality of stormwater discharges from the site and discusses good engineering practices that would be used to reduce the pollutants.

The USCG approves the locations and clearances of bridges constructed over navigable Waters of the U.S. through the issuance of bridge permits, under the authority of Section 9 of the *Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899* and the *General Bridge Act of 1946*. The USCG is required to ensure that environmental and navigational considerations are given careful attention in each bridge permitting decision. Bridge permit applications are submitted to and reviewed by the Bridge Administration Program within the appropriate USCG District Office. Any bridge permit associated with this project would be processed through the Seventh Coast Guard District Office in Miami, Florida. The application package is reviewed by both the District Commander and the USCG headquarters before a permit is issued or denied.

## ***Section 7.0***

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- USGS, 1987. U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 minute Topographical Quadrangle Map, Parrish, Florida, 1973 (Photo revised 1987).
- USGS, 2009. U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 minute Topographical Quadrangle Map, Lorraine, Florida, 2009.

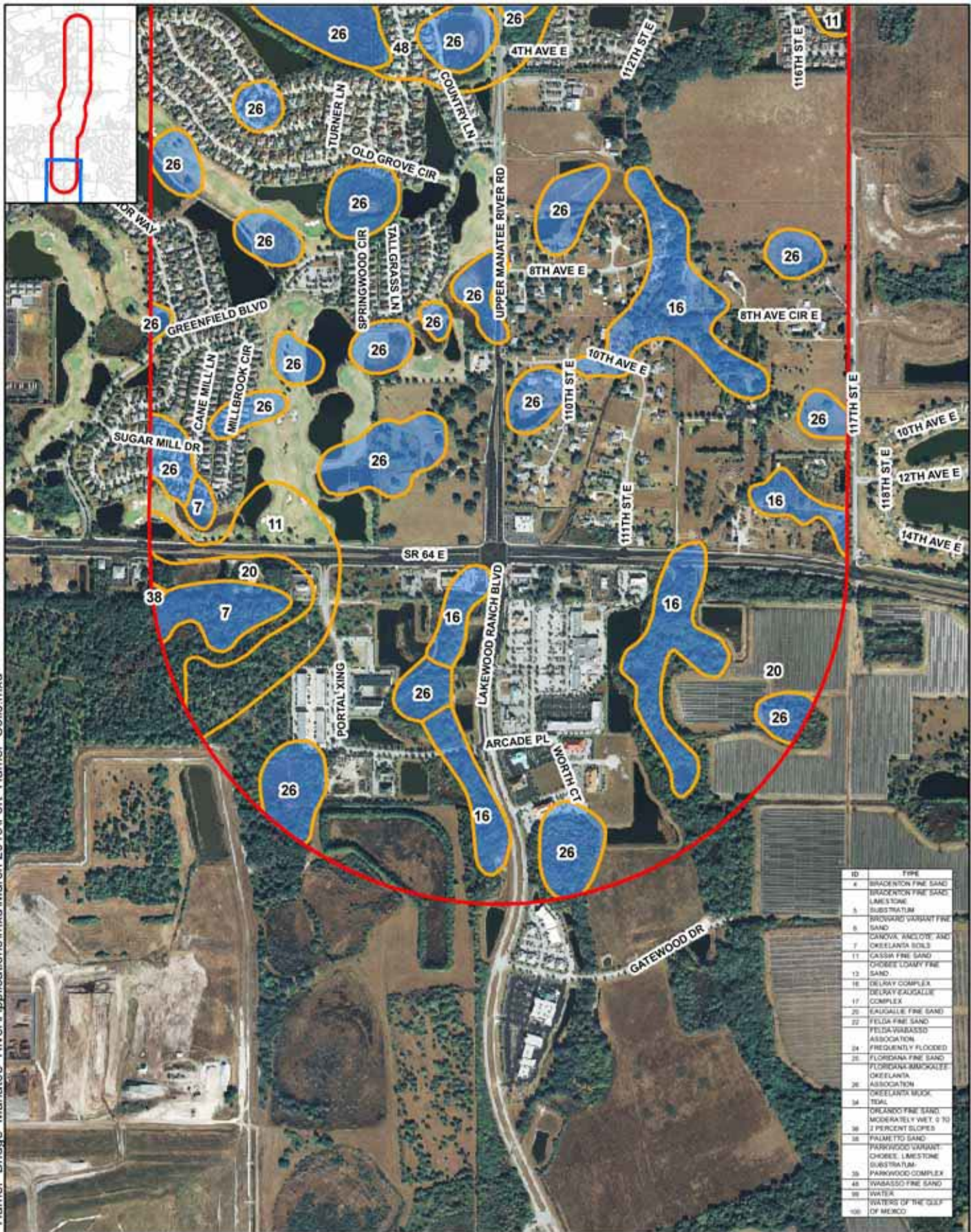
Fort Hamer Bridge FEIS  
Wetlands Evaluation Report

**Appendix A**

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*NRCS Soil Types within the Fort Hamer Alternative*





ID	TYPE
4	BRADENTON FINE SAND
5	BRADENTON FINE SAND/ LIMESTONE SUBSTRATUM
6	BROWARD VARIANT FINE SAND
7	CANAL, MARSH, AND OKEELANTA SOILS
11	CASSIA FINE SAND
13	CHERRY LOAMY FINE SAND
16	DELAIR COMPLEX DELTAIC SAUSSURE COMPLEX
20	ELADALE FINE SAND
22	FELDA FINE SAND
24	FELDA/VALENCIA ASSOCIATION FREQUENTLY FLOODED
25	FLORIDIANA FINE SAND
26	FLORIDIANA/SAUSSURE OKEELANTA ASSOCIATION OKEELANTA MUCK
34	TRAIL
38	ORLANDO FINE SAND MODERATELY WET, 0 TO 3 PERCENT SLOPES
48	PALMETTO SAND
49	PARKWOOD VARIANT CHOICE, LIMESTONE SUBSTRATUM
50	PARKWOOD COMPLEX
51	VARASSO FINE SAND
99	WATER
100	WATERS OF THE GULF OF MEXICO

### Legend

- Ft Hamer Alternative Study Area
- NRCS Soils w/ ID
- Hydric NRCS Soils

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
Soils- NRCS, 2010

Figure A1  
NRCS Soil Types  
within the Fort Hamer Alternative  
Study Area



0 500 1,000  
Feet

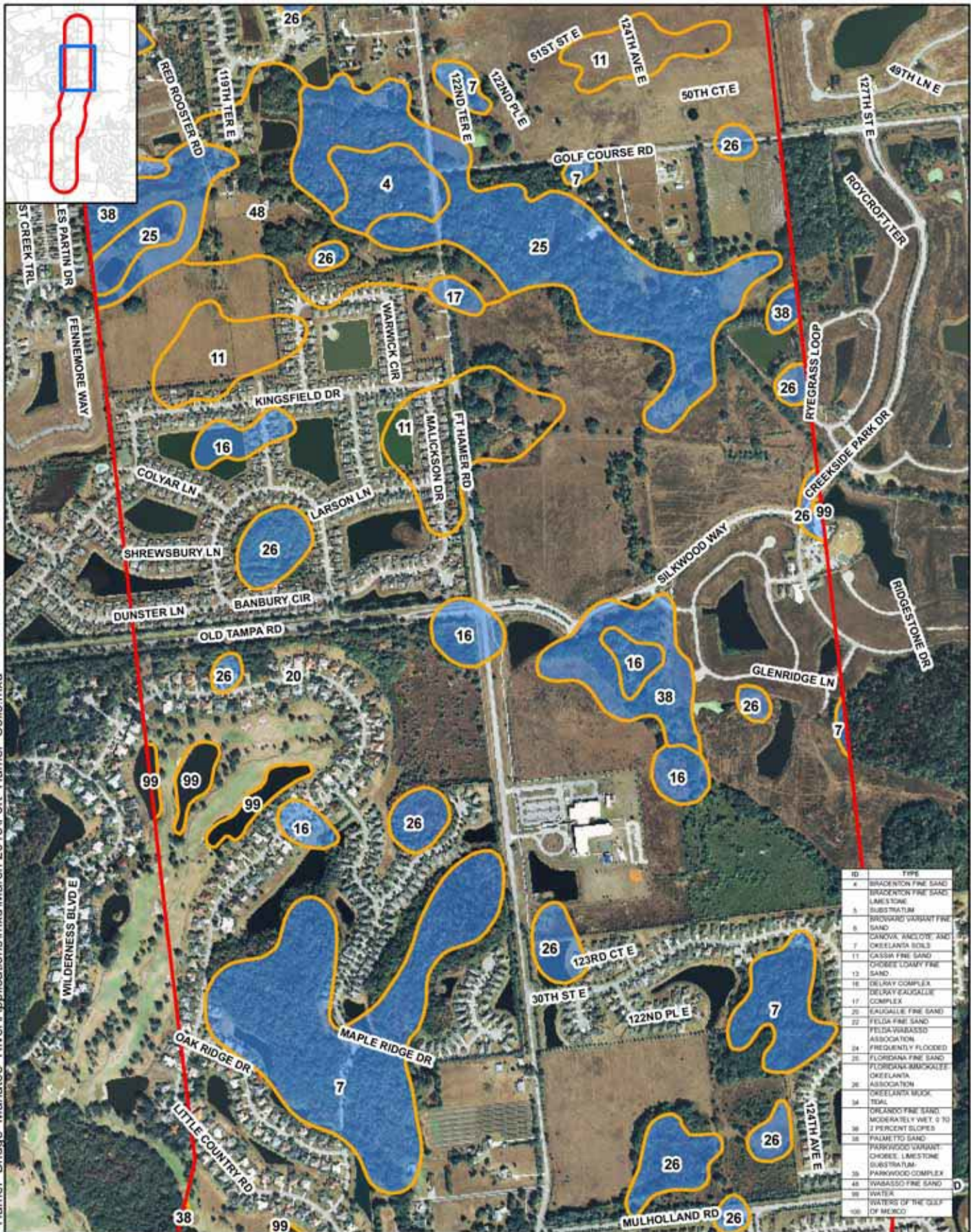










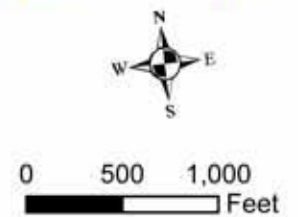


### Legend

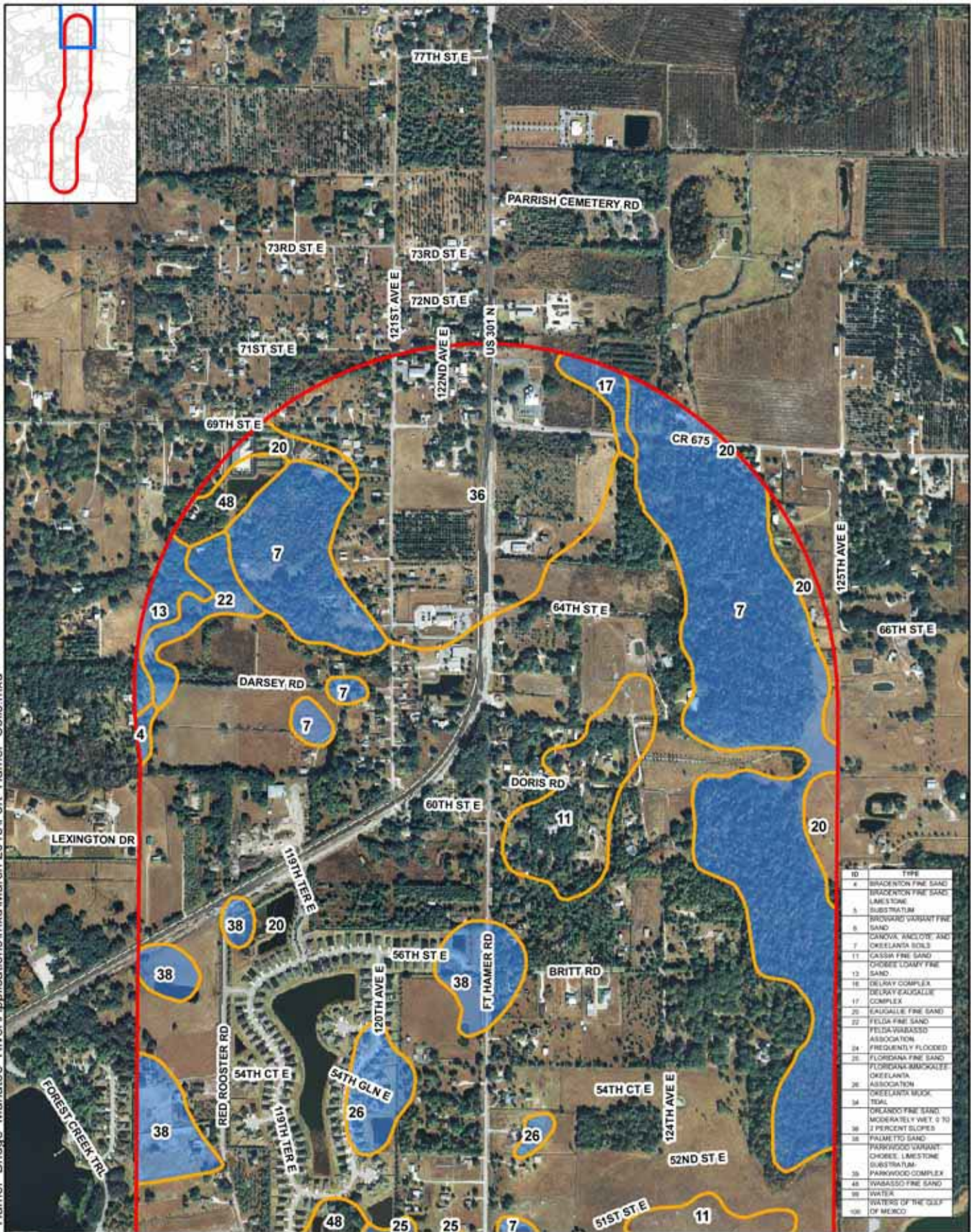
- Ft Hamer Alternative Study Area
- NRCS Soils w/ ID
- Hydric NRCS Soils

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
Soils- NRCS, 2010

Figure A4  
NRCS Soil Types  
within the Fort Hamer Alternative  
Study Area







### Legend

- Ft Hamer Alternative Study Area
- NRCS Soils w/ ID
- Hydric NRCS Soils

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
Soils- NRCS, 2010

Figure A5  
NRCS Soil Types  
within the Fort Hamer Alternative  
Study Area



0 500 1,000  
Feet



Fort Hamer Bridge FEIS  
Wetlands Evaluation Report

**Appendix B**

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*NRCS Soil Types within the Rye Road Alternative*



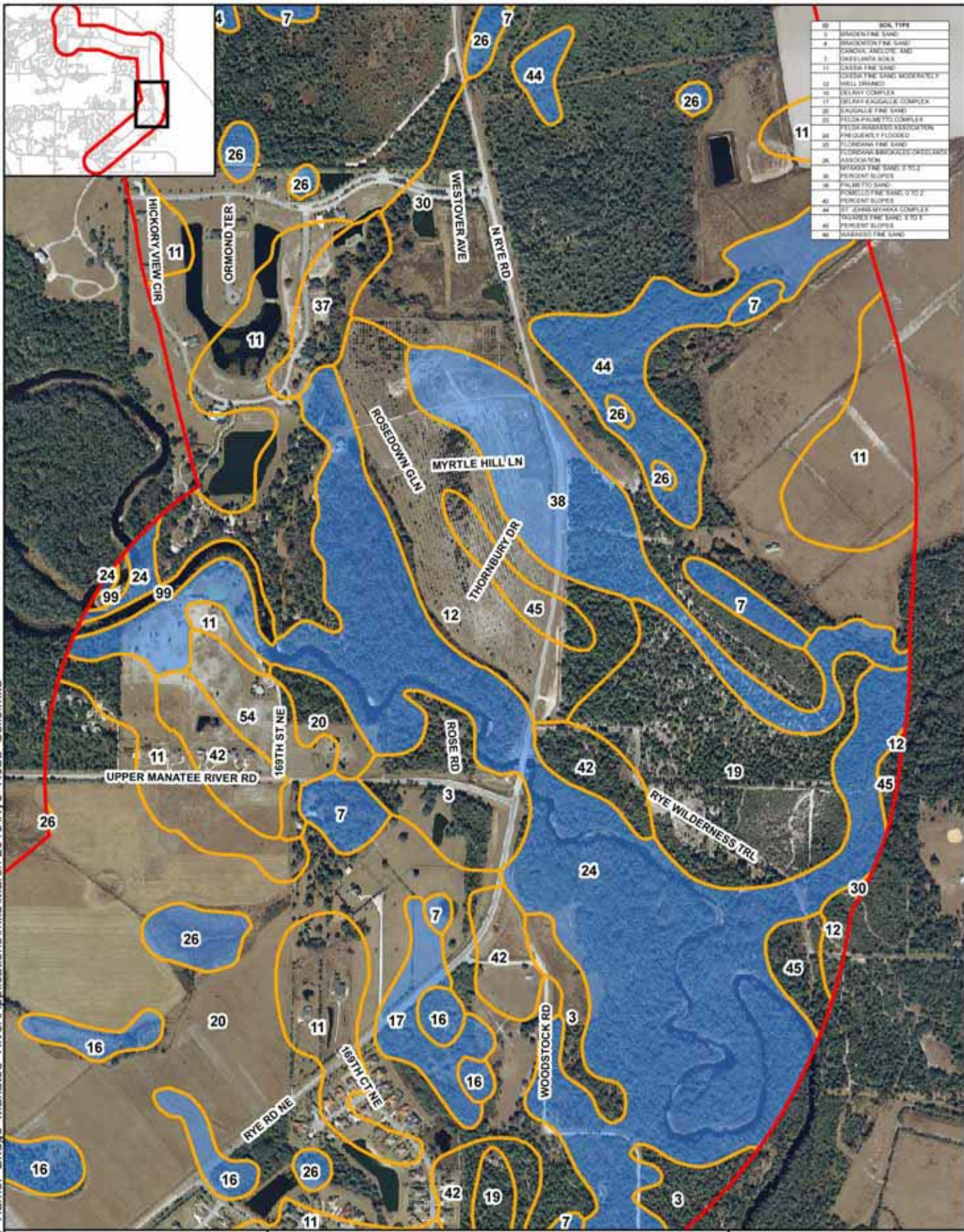








Path: I:\Projects\12009385\_Hamer Bridge Manatee River\Applications\mxd\March 2013\Rye Road Soils.mxd



SOIL TYPE
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**Legend**

- Rye Road Alternative Study Area
- NRCS Soils w/ ID
- Hydric NRCS Soils

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
Soils- NRCS, 2010

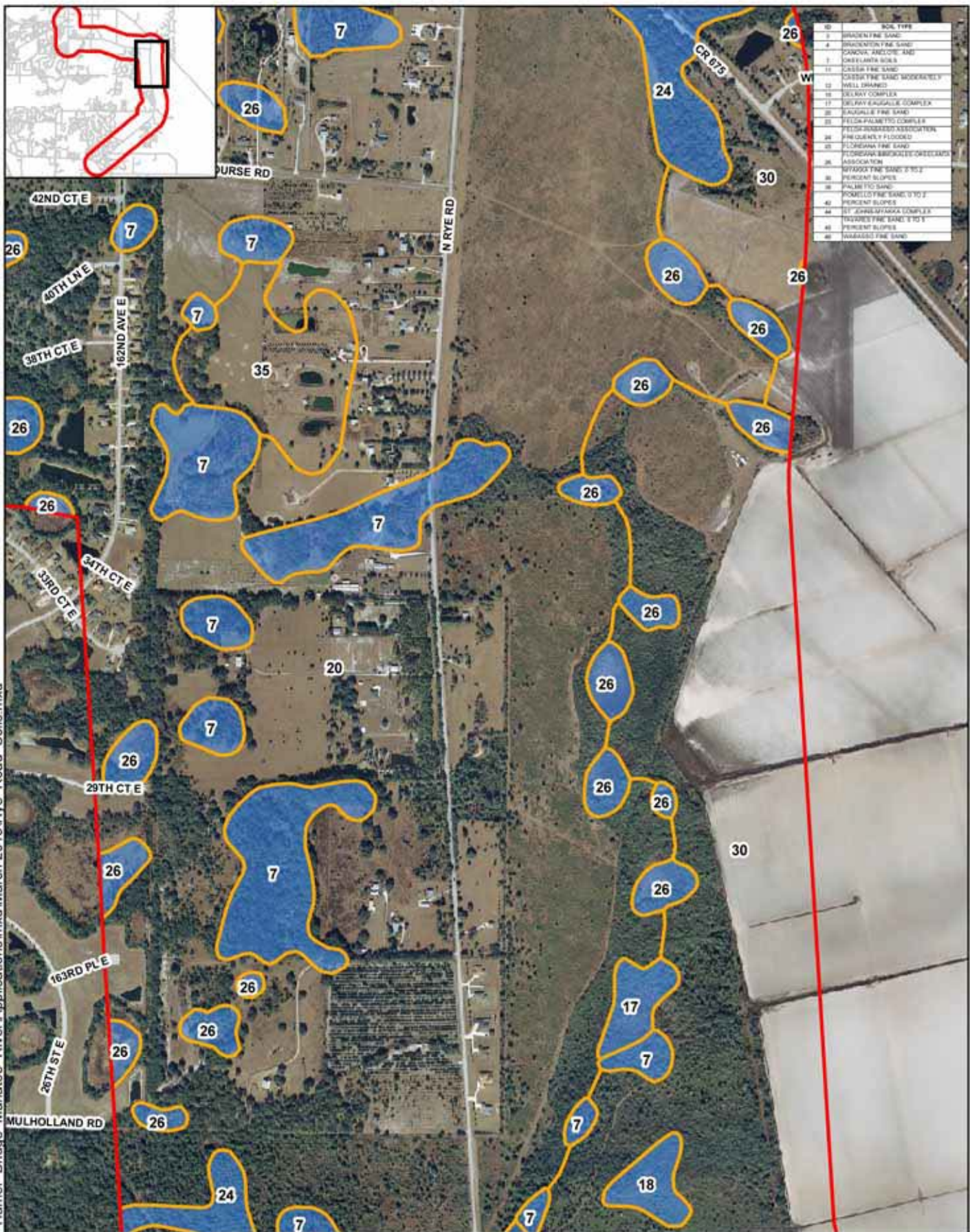
Figure B3  
NRCS Soil Types  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Study Area

North arrow pointing up (N), with W, E, and S also indicated.

Scale bar: 0 500 1,000 Feet



Path: I:\Projects\12009385\_Hamer Bridge Manatee River\Applications\mxd\March 2013\Rye Road Soils.mxd



### Legend

- Rye Road Alternative Study Area
- 20 NRCS Soils w/ ID
- Hydric NRCS Soils

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
Soils- NRCS, 2010

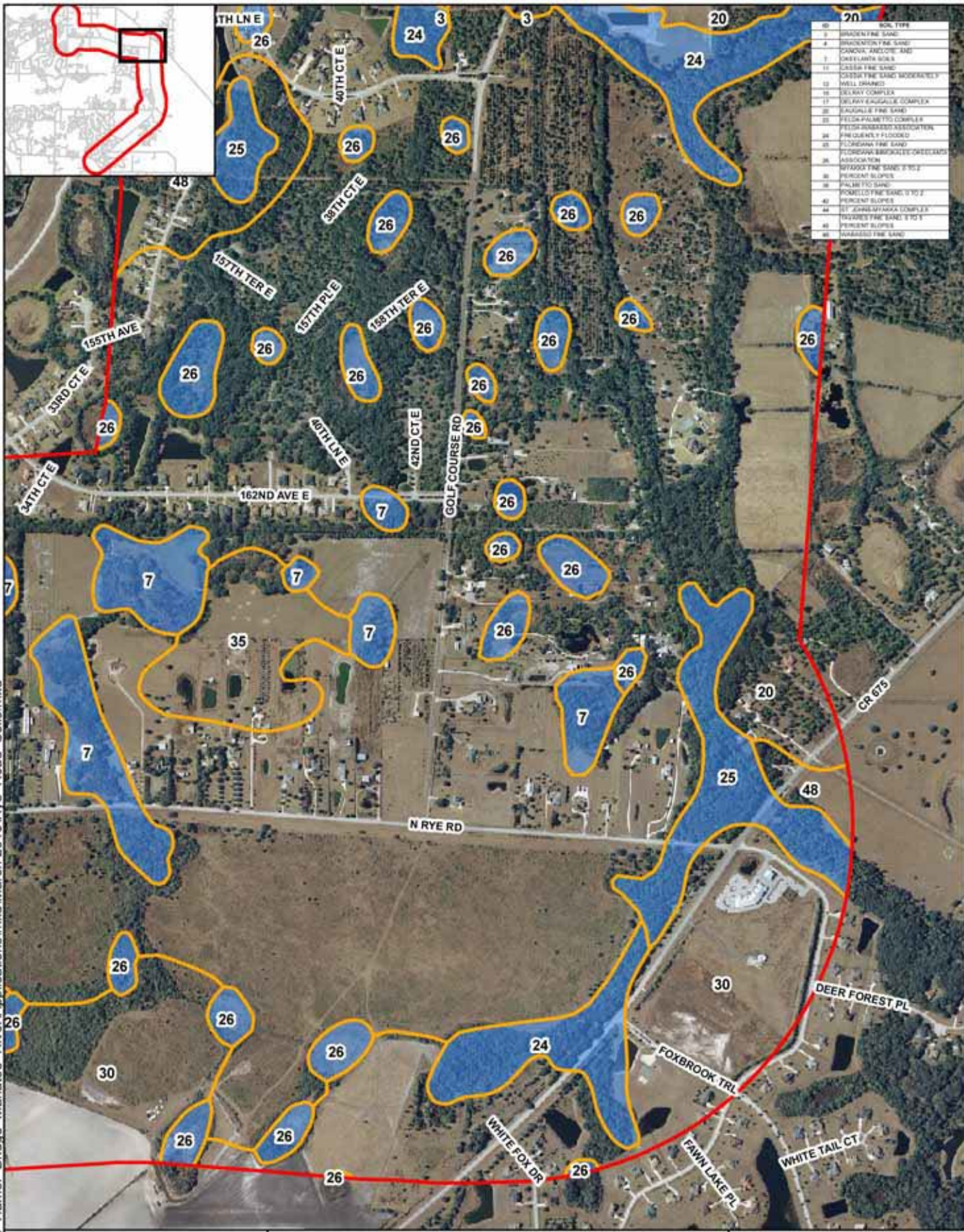
Figure B4  
NRCS Soil Types  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Study Area



0 500 1,000  
Feet



Path: I:\Projects\12009385\_Hamer Bridge Manatee River\Applications\mxd\March 2013\Rye Road Soils.mxd



SOIL TYPE
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**Legend**

- Rye Road Alternative Study Area
- NRCS Soils w/ ID
- Hydric NRCS Soils

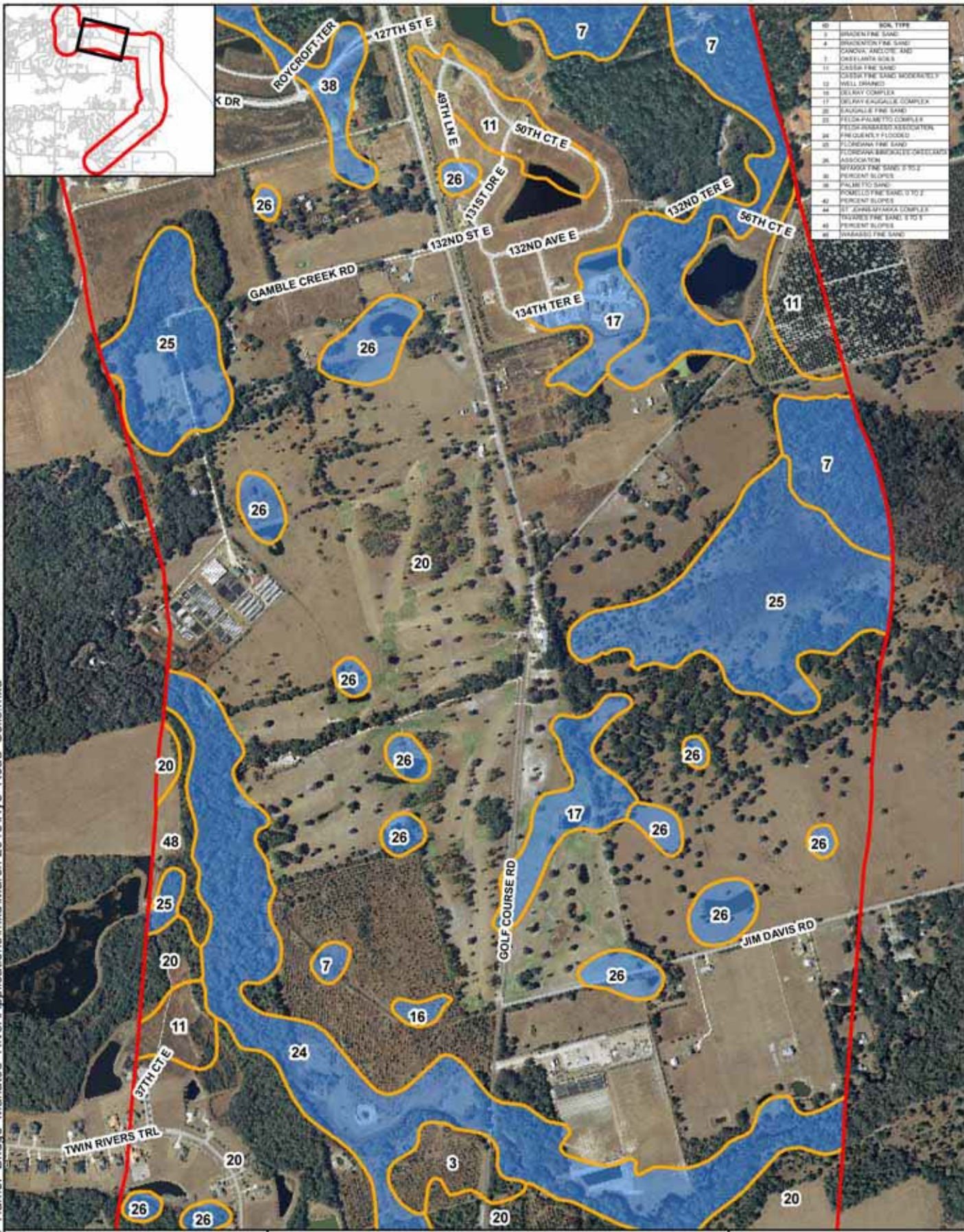
Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
Soils- NRCS, 2010

Figure B5  
NRCS Soil Types  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Study Area

0 500 1,000  
Feet



Path: I:\Projects\12009385\_Hamer Bridge Manatee River\Applications\mxd\March 2013\Rye Road Soils.mxd




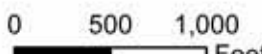
NO	SOIL TYPE
2	BRADENTON FINE SAND
4	BRADENTON FINE SAND
7	CANDLER SANDS AND SILT
11	CLAYEY FINE SAND
16	CLAYEY FINE SAND MODERATELY WELL DRAINED
17	CLAYEY FINE SAND
20	CLAYEY FINE SAND
24	CLAYEY FINE SAND
25	CLAYEY FINE SAND
26	CLAYEY FINE SAND
38	CLAYEY FINE SAND
48	CLAYEY FINE SAND
49	CLAYEY FINE SAND

**Legend**

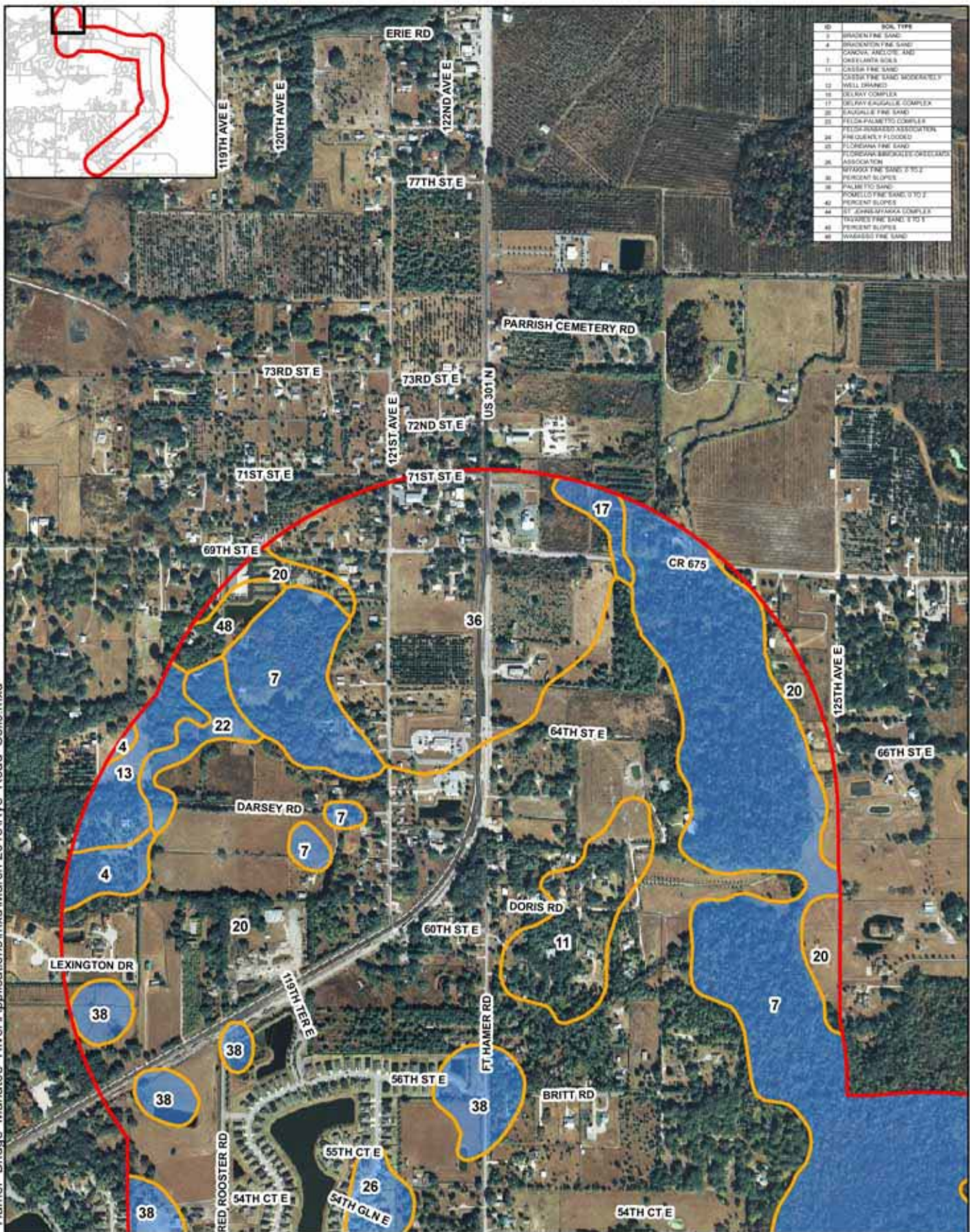
- Rye Road Alternative Study Area
- NRCS Soils w/ ID
- Hydric NRCS Soils

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
Soils- NRCS, 2010

Figure B6  
NRCS Soil Types  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Study Area

  
  
0 500 1,000  
Feet





### Legend

- Rye Road Alternative Study Area
- 20 NRCS Soils w/ ID
- Hydric NRCS Soils

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
Soils- NRCS, 2010

Figure B7  
NRCS Soil Types  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Study Area



0 500 1,000  
Feet





### Legend

- Rye Road Alternative Study Area
- NRCS Soils w/ ID
- Hydric NRCS Soils

Sources:  
Aerial- FDOT, 2011  
Soils- NRCS, 2010

Figure B8  
NRCS Soil Types  
within the Rye Road Alternative  
Study Area



0 500 1,000  
Feet



Fort Hamer Bridge FEIS  
Wetlands Evaluation Report

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**Appendix C**

*Agency Correspondence*

**APPENDIX C**  
**AGENCY CORRESPONDENCE**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Source</u></b>
08/19/99	NMFS to FDOT
08/06/01	SWFWMD to FDOT
08/17/01	NMFS to FDOT
10/03/01	FWS to FDOT
07/09/10	Federal Register 39555 and 39556
07/19/10	USCG Project Scoping Meeting Notification
07/20/10	USCG to USACE Tampa
07/20/10	USCG to USACE Jacksonville
07/20/10	USCG to NMFS Protected Resources Division
07/20/10	USCG to FWS
07/20/10	USC to EPA Region 4 South Florida Office
07/20/10	USCG to EPA Atlanta
07/20/10	USCG to NMFS
07/27/10	NMFS to USCG
07/29/10	USACE to USCG
08/24/10	FWS to USCG
07/24/13	USCG to NMFS
08/08/13	NMFS to USCG
08/27/13	NMFS to USCG
08/29/13	USCG to NMFS
09/18/13	USCG to NMFS
10/09/13	NMFS to URS
12/16/13	NMFS to USCG





**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southeast Regional Office  
9721 Executive Center Drive North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33702

August 19, 1999

Mr. Bryan Williams  
District Environmental Manager  
Florida Department of Transportation  
Post Office Box 1249  
Bartow, Florida 33830-1249

AUG 23 1999  
Environmental Management  
Office

Dear Mr. Williams:

Subject: Advance Notification  
Financial Management Number: 199668-1  
Federal Aid Project Number: 888 650 A  
Upper Manatee River Road from SR 64 to US 301  
Manatee County, Florida

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the information provided with your letter, dated July 9, 1999, regarding the Project Development and Environmental Study of a new span across the Manatee River to connect State Road 64 and U.S. 301 in the proximity of Upper Manatee River Road and Fort Hamer Road in Manatee County, Florida.

A variety of wetland habitats occur in the project area. Notably, extensive areas of black needlerush salt marsh are common in this area of the Manatee River. Other aquatic habitats occurring in the area include mangrove wetlands and seagrasses. These aquatic resources are recognized by the NMFS as public trust resources that provide habitat and water quality functions that are essential to maintaining a viable fishery resource. These wetlands, in association with other aquatic habitats serve as nursery, forage, and/or refuge sites for estuarine finfish and invertebrates with commercial, recreational, and ecological importance. In addition to their habitat value, these wetlands provide important water quality and control functions such as pollutant and sediment removal, wave attenuation, and flood water storage. The NMFS recommends that all practicable measures to avoid and minimize impacts to aquatic resources be considered during the design phase of the project.

Be advised that the project area wetlands are identified as Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) in the 1998 generic amendment of the Fishery Management Plans for the Gulf of Mexico. The generic amendment was prepared by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council as required by the 1996 amendment to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Federal agencies which permit, fund, or undertake activities which may adversely impact EFH must undertake an EFH Consultation with the NMFS. In that regard, it may be beneficial for the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to address EFH in the Wetland Evaluation Report to assist

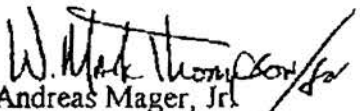


the various Federal funding and regulatory agencies in preparing their EFH Assessments for this project. EFH Assessments must include: 1) a description of the proposed action; 2) an analysis of the effects (including cumulative effects) of the proposed action on EFH, the managed fish species, and major prey species; 3) the Federal agency's views regarding the effects of the action on EFH; and 4) proposed mitigation, if applicable. Additional information regarding EFH can be found at <http://galveston.ssp.nmfs.gov/>.

In cases where two or more Federal agencies are undertaking, funding, and/or permitting an action one agency may assume the EFH Consultation responsibility for the project provided the NMFS is notified by the lead Federal agency that it is acting on behalf of the other agencies. Refer to 50 CFR Sections 600.920(b) and 600.920(c) (*Federal Register* Vol. 62, No. 244; December 19, 1997; Page 66556) for information regarding designation of consultation responsibility.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide you with our comments. Please direct related comments, questions, or correspondence to Mr. David N. Dale in St. Petersburg, Florida. He may be contacted at 727/570-5311 or at the letterhead address above.

Sincerely,

  
Andreas Mager, Jr.  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
Habitat Conservation Division

cc:  
COE-Jacksonville (M. Nowicki)  
COE-Tampa (E. Summa)  
SWFWMD-Brooksville (C. Hull)  
USCG-Miami  
EPA-Atlanta  
FWS-Vero Beach  
FHWA-Tallahassee  
F/SER4  
F/SER43-St Pete





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Employer

# Southwest Florida Water Management District

**Tampa Service Office**  
7601 Highway 301 North  
Tampa, Florida 33637-6759  
(813) 985-7481 or  
1-800-836-0797 (FL only)  
SUNCOM 578-2070

**Bartow Service Office**  
170 Century Boulevard  
Bartow, Florida 33830-7700  
(863) 534-1448 or  
1-800-492-7862 (FL only)  
SUNCOM 572-6200

2379 Broad Street, Brooksville, Florida 34604-6899  
(352) 796-7211 or 1-800-423-1476 (FL only)  
SUNCOM 628-4150 TDD only 1-800-231-6103 (FL only)  
On the Internet at: WaterMatters.org

**Venice Service Office**  
115 Corporation Way  
Venice, Florida 34292-3524  
(941) 486-1212 or  
1-800-320-3503 (FL only)  
SUNCOM 526-6900

**Lecanto Service Office**  
3600 West Sovereign Path  
Suite 226  
Lecanto, Florida 34461-8070  
(352) 527-8131  
SUNCOM 667-3271

August 6, 2001

Ms. Gwen G. Pipkin  
Environmental Project Manager  
Florida Department of Transportation  
Post Office Box 1249  
Bartow, FL 33831-1249

**RE: PD&E - Final Draft Wetland Evaluation Report (WER)**  
**Upper Manatee River Road**  
**FN: 199668-1-21-01 FPI: 888 650 A**  
**Manatee County, Florida**

Dear Ms. Pipkin:

The Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) appreciates the WER concerning the above referenced project. It appears the SWFWMD might be able to provide appropriate mitigation for the proposed wetland impacts associated with the project. Depending on approval from the other federal and state regulatory agencies, this mitigation may include saltwater wetland restoration activities associated with Terra Ceia, a SWFWMD-SWIM project within the Manatee River Basin. The ability to mitigate the freshwater wetland impacts within an existing project site utilized for FDOT Mitigation (Rutland Ranch, SWFWMD - Land Management) will depend on the ability to eliminate and reduce impacts. Rutland Ranch is currently proposed to provide mitigation for freshwater wetland impacts associated with future expansion of SR 64.

As this Upper Manatee River Road project progresses, the SWFWMD would appreciate status updates and will continue evaluating mitigation options in preparation if this project does proceed into the design and permitting phase. This mitigation could include habitat enhancement & restoration of existing public lands (e.g. SWFWMD, FDEP, FFWCC, County), proposed public lands acquisition & habitat improvements, and/or habitat improvements associated with private mitigation banks. No private mitigation banks are currently available within the Manatee River Basin.

The capability to provide mitigation doesn't negate the FDOT from permitting requirements (reference ERP Manual, Part B, Chapter 3.2.1) to evaluate and justify design modifications to eliminate or reduce wetland impacts associated with proposed projects.

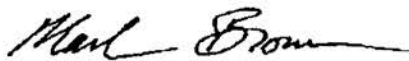
**Ronnie E. Duncan**  
Chair, Pinellas  
**Thomas G. Dabney, II**  
Vice Chair, Sarasota  
**Jasat D. Kovach**  
Secretary, Hillsborough  
**Watson L. Haynes, II**  
Treasurer, Pinellas  
**Edward W. Chance**  
Manatee  
**Monroe "Al" Coe**  
Citrus  
**Maggie N. Dominguez**  
Hillsborough  
**Pamela L. Fentress**  
Highlands  
**Ronald C. Johnson**  
Polk  
**Heidi B. McCree**  
Hillsborough  
**John K. Reske, III**  
Pasco  
**E. D. "Sonny" Vergara**  
Executive Director  
**Gene A. Heath**  
Assistant Executive Director  
**William S. Bilenky**  
General Counsel

Protecting Your  
Water Resources

This WER will be forwarded to the SWFWMD-Venice office for their review and files. They may have additional comments of this report and will be the responsible WMD office to review any potential ERP applications associated with this project. District One staff is encouraged to request assistance and guidance from Hugh Dinkler (SunCom 526-6900) and his staff.

When appropriate mitigation options are located and approved by the various federal and state environmental regulatory agencies, the SWFWMD is committed to comply with the statutory provisions (Section 373.4137, Florida Statutes) to provide mitigation for wetland impacts associated with FDOT projects. We look forward to continue working with you and others on this project and if you should have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to call me at (352) 796-7211, ext. 4488, Suncom 628-4488, or via e-mail at [mark.brown@swfwmd.state.fl.us](mailto:mark.brown@swfwmd.state.fl.us).

Sincerely,



Mark M. Brown, PWS, CPSS  
Environmental Scientist

cc: FDOT Mitigation - Manatee River Basin File  
SWFWMD - Venice, Hugh Dinker, Environmental Manager  
SWFWMD - Tampa, SWIM, Brandt Henningsen, Ph.D., Senior Env. Scientist  
SWFWMD - Brooksville, Clark Hull, Environmental Program Director





333-40  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Southeast Regional Office  
9721 Executive Center Drive North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33702

August 17, 2001

Gwen G. Pipkin  
Florida Department of Transportation  
District One Environmental Management Office  
PO Box 1249  
Bartow, Florida 33831-1249

Dear Ms. Pipkin:

Subject: Draft Wetland Evaluation Report  
Upper Manatee River Road PD& E Study  
Financial Project No.: 199668-1-21-01  
Federal Project ID No.: 8888 650 A  
Manatee County, Florida

**RECEIVED**  
AUG 30 2001

Environmental Management  
Office

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the draft Wetland Evaluation Report provided on July 19, 2001. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has made a determination that the subject project is expected to have minimal adverse impacts on Essential Fish Habitat. We find that the descriptions of fishery resources and habitats in the project area are adequate. Additionally, the report adequately describes the potential adverse impacts associated with the proposed activity. Compensatory mitigation is expected to be accomplished by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) via the provisions of Florida Statute 373.4137.

The report identifies indirect impacts to vegetative communities that would be shaded by the bridge structure. However, FDOT anticipates mitigating only for the direct impacts (i.e. filling) on wetlands. In view of this, the NMFS finds that the project as currently proposed could have a more than minimal adverse impact on EFH and associated fishery resources. Recognizing that final project plans will be developed during the design stage of the project; appropriate mitigation will be determined via the FDOT/SWFWMD's Mitigation Core Group; and, that EFH consultation will be completed during the permitting phase, the NMFS provides the following:

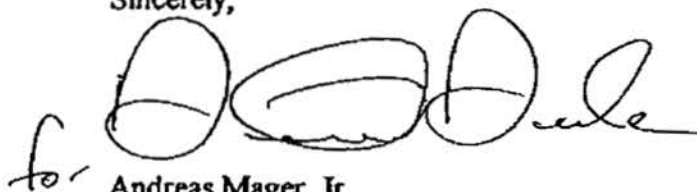
#### **Preliminary EFH Conservation Recommendation**

Compensatory mitigation should be provided for lost and reduced wetland functions resulting from direct and indirect project impacts such as filling, dredging, and shading.



We appreciate the opportunity to provide you with our comments. Please direct related comments, questions, or correspondence to Mr. David N. Dale in St. Petersburg, Florida. He may be contacted at 727/570-5311 or at the letterhead address above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andreas Mager, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andreas Mager, Jr.  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
Habitat Conservation Division

cc:  
F/SER4  
F/SER43  
FWS-St. Petersburg  
EPA-Atlanta  
FDEP-Tampa  
FFWCC-Punta Gorda





# United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

6620 Southpoint Drive South  
Suite 310  
Jacksonville, Florida 32216-0912

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
FWS/R4/ES-JAFL

October 3, 2001

Ms. Gwen Pipkin  
Florida Department of Transportation  
801 N. Broadway  
Bartow, Florida 33830

**RECEIVED**  
OCT 09 2001

Re: Draft Wetland Evaluation Report  
FWS Log No: 01-1034 (2) (St. Pete)

Environmental Management  
Office

Dear Ms. Pipkin:

This is in response to your Draft Wetland Evaluation Report provided July 19, 2001, requesting our review and concurrence that the impacts proposed for the Upper Manatee River Road will not adversely impact federally listed species.

The project purpose is to improve north-south traffic circulation between I-75 and Rye Road/C.R. 675 and S.R. 64 and U.S. 301. Four potential corridors have been identified for the project; expansion of I-75, Upper Manatee River Road/Fort Hammer Road, Rye Road/C.R. 675, and Rye Road/Golf Course Road.

The Service finds that the report adequately describes the potential impacts to habitats in the project area. Compensatory mitigation is expected to be accomplished by the Southwest Florida Water Management District via the provisions of Florida Statute 373.4137.

The report discusses indirect impacts to vegetative communities that could be shaded by the bridge. The FDOT expects to mitigate for direct impacts to wetlands. The Service will comment on the appropriateness of the mitigation proposed for direct and indirect wetland impacts through the FDOT Mitigation Review process and the Corps' permitting process.

At this time the impacts to sea grasses are minimal and therefore are not likely to adversely affect critical habitat for the West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*).

We appreciate the opportunity to comment. If you have any question please contact Shelley Norton, (727) 570-5398, extension 14.

Sincerely,

*Don Palmer*

*for*

Peter M. Benjamin  
Asst. Field Supervisor

S: palmer01-1034(2)\acm\10.03.01



**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY****Coast Guard****[Docket No. USCG–2010–0455]****Environmental Impact Statement; Fort Hamer Bridge, Manatee County, FL****AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); request for comments; notice of public scoping meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Coast Guard announces its intent to prepare an EIS for a proposed new bridge (Fort Hamer Bridge) crossing over the Manatee River in Manatee County, Florida. The proposed location for the Fort Hamer Bridge is in northeast Manatee County adjacent to Fort Hamer Park and will connect Fort Hamer Road and Upper Manatee River Road.

We request your comments on environmental concerns related to a new bridge over the Manatee River in Manatee County, Florida. This includes suggesting analyses, methodologies and possible sources of data or information related to a new bridge.

The Coast Guard will hold a public scoping meeting for citizens to provide oral and written comments relating to the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge and the preparation of an EIS. This meeting will be open to the public.

**DATES:** *Comment period:* Comments and related material must either be submitted to our online docket via <http://www.regulations.gov> on or before August 23, 2010, or reach the Docket Management Facility by that date.

*Public meeting:* A public scoping meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 17, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. to provide an opportunity for oral comments. If you would like to make an oral presentation at the meeting or submit written materials as part of the meeting record please provide your information identified by docket number USCG–2010–0455 to either the online docket via <http://www.regulations.gov> or the Docket Management Facility no later than August 3, 2010 using any one of the four methods listed under addresses. Requests to make oral comments or to submit written comments and related material may also be submitted to Coast Guard personnel specified at that meeting.

**ADDRESSES:** The public scoping meeting will be held at the Carlos E. Haile Middle School, 9501 E. State Road 64,

Bradenton, Florida 34212–7240 and can be contacted at (941) 714–7240.

You may submit written comments identified by docket number USCG–2010–0455 using any one of the following methods:

(1) *Federal eRulemaking Portal:*

<http://www.regulations.gov>.

(2) *Fax:* 202–493–2251.

(3) *Mail:* Docket Management Facility (M–30), U.S. Department of Transportation, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12–140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590–0001.

(4) *Hand delivery:* Same as mail address above, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is 202–366–9329.

To avoid duplication, please use only one of these methods. For instructions on submitting comments, see the “Public Participation and Request for Comments” portion of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** If you have questions regarding this notice, please contact Mr. Randall Overton, U.S. Coast Guard, telephone 305–415–6749, e-mail [randall.d.overton@uscg.mil](mailto:randall.d.overton@uscg.mil). If you have questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, call Ms. Renee V. Wright, Program Manager, Docket Operations, telephone 202–366–9826.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Public Participation and Request for Comments**

We encourage you to participate in the scoping process by submitting comments and related material. The purpose of the scoping process is to ensure that the full range of issues related to the proposed action are addressed, and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. All comments received will be posted, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov> and will include any personal information you have provided.

*Submitting comments:* If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this notice (USCG–2010–0455) and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation. We recommend that you include your name and a mailing address, an e-mail address, or a telephone number in the body of your document so that we can contact you if we have questions regarding your submission. You may submit your comments and material online, or by fax, mail or hand delivery, but please use only one of these means.

To submit your comment online, go to <http://www.regulations.gov>, click on the “submit a comment” box, which will then become highlighted in blue. In the “Document Type” drop down menu select “Notices” and insert “USCG–2010–0455” in the “Keyword” box. Click “Search” then click on the balloon shape in the Actions column. If you submit your comments by mail or hand delivery, submit them in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. If you submit them by mail and would like to know that they reached the Facility, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. We will consider all comments and material received during the comment period.

*Viewing the comments:* To view the comments as well as documents submitted to the docket go to <http://www.regulations.gov>, click on the “read comments” box, which will then become highlighted in blue. In the “Keyword” box insert USCG–2010–0455 and click “Search.” Click the “Open Docket Folder” in the “Actions” column. You may also view the docket online by visiting the Docket Management Facility in Room W12–140 on the ground floor of the Department of Transportation West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. We have an agreement with the Department of Transportation to use the Docket Management Facility.

*Privacy Act:* Anyone can search the electronic form of comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review a Privacy Act, system of records notice regarding our public dockets in the January 17, 2008 issue of the **Federal Register** (73 FR 3316).

*Information on service for individuals with disabilities:* For information on facilities or services for individuals with disabilities or to request special assistance at the public meeting contact Mr. Randall Overton, U.S. Coast Guard, telephone 305–415–6749, e-mail [randall.d.overton@uscg.mil](mailto:randall.d.overton@uscg.mil).

**Background and Purpose**

The proposed bridge crossing is a priority project in the Financially Feasible Plan of the Sarasota-Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (SMMPO) 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan. The project’s Web site is <http://www.forthamerbridge.com>. According to the SMMPO, the proposed bridge is needed to provide an alternate

north/south route to the east of Interstate Highway 75 (I-75) and enhance emergency service access to northeast Manatee County. Further, a new bridge will serve to improve the level of service to the existing network of north Manatee County roadways as development expands through the Parrish area and northward in Manatee County. The proposed location for the Fort Hamer Bridge is in northeast Manatee County adjacent to Fort Hamer Park and will connect Fort Hamer Road and Upper Manatee River Road.

Alternatives under consideration include: (1) Taking no action; and (2) various build alternatives that satisfy the purpose and need. Build alternatives may include low, mid, and high-level fixed bridges, alternatives to the east, west and center of the project corridor, and other alternatives that may result from the scoping process. We are requesting your comments on environmental concerns that you may have related to a new bridge in northeast Manatee County. This includes suggesting analyses and methodologies for use in the EIS or possible sources of data or information we should consider.

#### Public Scoping Meeting

The Public Scoping Meeting is open to the public and will start with an informal open house, followed by an overview presentation and a formal public comment period.

At the open house, Coast Guard personnel will be available to provide more information about the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), EIS process, and the Fort Hamer Bridge design project. Project graphics providing basic information about the project and the NEPA EIS process will be on display during the informal portion of the meeting.

Attendees at the meeting, who wish to present testimony and have not previously made a request to do so, will follow those having submitted a request, as time permits. If a large number of persons wish to speak, the presiding officer may limit the time allotted to each speaker. Conversely, the public meeting may end early if all present wishing to speak have done so.

A court reporter will be present during both the informal open house and the formal public comment period to record verbal comments from the public. The public can submit written comments related to the EIS and the proposed action at any time during the meeting. Verbal comments will be recorded and transcribed, and the transcription will be placed in the public docket along with any written

statements that may be submitted during the meeting. These comments and statements will be addressed by the Coast Guard as part of the EIS.

#### Scoping Process

Public scoping is an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed in this EIS and for identifying the issues related to the proposed action that may have a significant effect on the project environment. The scoping process begins with publication of this notice and ends after the Coast Guard has:

- Invited the participation of Federal, State, and local agencies, any affected Indian tribe, and other interested persons;

- Requested the Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Federal Highway Administration, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers to serve as cooperating agencies in the preparation of this EIS. With this Notice of Intent, we are asking Federal, State, and local agencies with jurisdiction or special expertise with respect to environmental issues in the project area, in addition to those we have already contacted, to formally cooperate with us in the preparation of this EIS;

- Determined the scope and the issues to be analyzed in depth in the EIS;

- Allocated responsibility for preparing the EIS components;

- Indicated any related environmental assessments or environmental impact statements that are not part of this EIS;

- Identified other relevant environmental review and consultation requirements, such as Coastal Zone Management Act consistency determinations, and threatened and endangered species and habitat impacts;

- Indicated the relationship between timing of the environmental review and other aspects of the application process; and

- Exercised our option under 40 CFR 1501.7(b) to hold the public scoping meeting announced in this notice.

Once the scoping process is complete, the Coast Guard will prepare a draft EIS, and we will publish a **Federal Register** notice announcing its public availability. If you wish to be mailed or e-mailed the announcement of the EIS's notice of availability, please contact the person named in **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** or send a request to be added to our contact mailing list along with your name and mailing address or an e-mail address online, by fax, mail, or hand delivery according to

the "Submitting comments" instructions above. Please include the docket number for this notice (USCG-2010-0455) in your request. If you provide comments on this notice, we will automatically add your contact information to our contact mailing list and you will automatically be sent an announcement of the draft EIS's notice of availability. We will provide the public with an opportunity to review and comment on the draft EIS. After the Coast Guard considers those comments, we will prepare the final EIS and similarly announce its availability and solicit public review and comment.

Dated: July 2, 2010.

**Dana A. Goward,**

*Director, Office of Assessment, Integration and Risk Management.*

[FR Doc. 2010-16721 Filed 7-8-10; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 9110-04-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

[CIS No. 2489-09; DHS Docket No. USCIS 2010-0032]

**RIN 1615-ZA95**

### Extension of the Designation of El Salvador for Temporary Protected Status and Automatic Extension of Employment Authorization Documentation for Salvadoran TPS Beneficiaries

**AGENCY:** U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This Notice announces that the Secretary of Homeland Security has extended the designation of El Salvador for temporary protected status (TPS) for 18 months from its current expiration date of September 9, 2010, through March 9, 2012. This Notice also sets forth procedures necessary for nationals of El Salvador (or aliens having no nationality who last habitually resided in El Salvador) with TPS to re-register and to apply for an extension of their employment authorization documents (EADs) with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Re-registration is limited to persons who previously registered for TPS under the designation of El Salvador and whose applications have been granted or remain pending. Certain nationals of El Salvador (or aliens having no nationality who last habitually resided in El Salvador) who have not previously





16475/3889  
1928  
July 19, 2010

### **PROJECT SCOPING MEETING NOTIFICATION**

**Subject: Project Name: Fort Hamer Bridge, Manatee River Crossing**  
**Project Limits: From approximately 900 feet north of Waterlefe Boulevard on Upper Manatee River Road to 1,600 feet south of Mulholland Road on Fort Hamer Road**  
**County/State: Manatee County, Florida**  
**USCG Docket Number: USCG-2010-0455**

The United States Coast Guard (USCG), in conjunction with Manatee County (County), is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the above referenced project. This letter is an invitation for you or someone from your agency to attend a scoping meeting. The scoping meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 17, 2010 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Carlos E. Haile Middle School, 9501 E. State Road 64, Bradenton, Florida 34212-7240.

The purpose of this scoping meeting is to:

1. Determine the scope and significance of issues and the degree of analysis required for the EIS. This will also include identification of the range of alternatives and potential impacts to be evaluated.
2. Identify issues which are not significant or which have been covered by prior environmental studies and eliminate them from detailed study. This would narrow discussion in the EIS to a brief description of why they will not have a significant effect on the human environment or providing a reference to their coverage elsewhere.
3. Allocate assignments for sections of the EIS among lead and cooperating agencies with the lead agency (USCG) retaining responsibility for the EIS preparation.
4. Identify any environmental assessments or impact statements, which are being prepared and are related to, but are not part of, the scope of the EIS under consideration.
5. Identify other environmental review and consultation requirements so the lead and cooperating agencies may prepare other required analyses and studies concurrently with, and integrated with, the EIS. Examples of additional requirements include surveys and studies required by the National Historic Preservation Act and the Endangered Species Act.
6. Identify permits, licenses, or entitlements that will be necessary.
7. Determine the relationship between the timing of the preparation of environmental analyses and the agency's tentative planning and decision-making schedule.

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July 19, 2010

URS Corporation Southern of Tampa, Florida has been retained by the County to develop the EIS and conceptual design features for the proposed project.

The proposed improvements would involve a new bridge crossing over the Manatee River in Manatee County, Florida. The project limits extend from approximately 900 feet north of Waterlefe Boulevard on Upper Manatee River Road to 1600 feet south of Mulholland Road on Fort Hamer Road

Alternatives that have been considered or are currently under consideration include:

1. Taking no action;
2. Constructing a low, mid, or high-level bridge;
3. Alternatives to the east, west and center of the project corridor; and
4. Alternate corridors.

The proposed bridge will provide an alternate north/south route to the east of Interstate Highway 75 (I-75) and enhance emergency service access to northeast Manatee County. The proposed bridge will improve the level of service to north Manatee County roadways as development expands through the Parrish area and northward in Manatee County.

This formal scoping meeting is necessary to aid the USCG and the County in project development and to increase interagency awareness of concerns. An agenda and project location map are enclosed to assist you in studying this project and outlining potential issues. If you have any questions prior to the meeting please contact: Randall Overton, U.S. Coast Guard, telephone 305-415-6749, e-mail [randall.d.overton@uscg.mil](mailto:randall.d.overton@uscg.mil).

Your agency's participation and cooperation in this preliminary issues identification effort is highly encouraged, and the USCG would appreciate being notified by August 3, 2010 whether your agency will attend this meeting.

Sincerely,



BARRY DRAGON  
Director, District Bridge Program  
U.S. Coast Guard



U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander (dpb)  
Seventh Coast Guard District

909 SE 1st Ave (Suite 432)  
Miami, FL 33131-3050  
Staff Symbol: dpb  
Phone: 305-415-6749  
Fax: 305-415-6763  
Email: randall.d.overton@uscg.mil

16475/3889  
1932  
July 20, 2010

Mr. John Fellows  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
10117 Princess Palm Avenue, Suite 120  
Tampa, FL 33610-8302

Re: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency on an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida.

Dear Mr. Fellows:

The United States Coast Guard (USCG), in conjunction with Manatee County (County), is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida. In accordance with 40 CFR 1501.6, the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provision of the National Environmental Policy Act, we are requesting you be a Cooperating Agency on this environmental document. This request is based on your Regulatory Jurisdiction. Designation as a Cooperating Agency does not imply that your agency supports the proposed project.

The proposed bridge crossing is a priority project in the Financially Feasible Plan of the Sarasota-Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization's (SMMPO) 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan. The project's Web site is <http://www.forthamerbridge.com>. According to the SMMPO, the proposed bridge is needed to provide an alternate north/south route to the east of Interstate Highway 75 (I-75) and enhance emergency service access to northeast Manatee County. Further, a new bridge will serve to improve the level of service to the existing network of north Manatee County roadways as development expands through the Parrish area and northward in Manatee County. The proposed location for the Fort Hamer Bridge is in northeast Manatee County adjacent to Fort Hamer Park and will connect Fort Hamer Road and Upper Manatee River Road. Alternatives under consideration include: (1) Taking no action; and (2) various build alternatives that satisfy the purpose and need. Build alternatives may include low, mid, and high-level fixed bridges, alternatives to the east, west and center of the project corridor, and other alternatives that may result from the scoping process. We are requesting your comments on environmental concerns that you may have related to a new bridge in northeast Manatee County. This includes suggesting analyses and methodologies for use in the EIS or possible sources of data or information we should consider.

Your agency's involvement as a Cooperating Agency should entail those areas under its jurisdiction. Responsibilities of a Cooperating Agency include:

- Participation in the NEPA scoping and environmental review process at the earliest possible time.
- Providing comments on the project's purpose and need, goals and objectives, methodologies, and range of alternatives.
- Assisting in the development of a project coordination plan, including a project schedule.
- Providing (on request of the lead agency) information and assisting with the preparation of environmental analyses including portions of the NEPA documents relevant to your agency's jurisdiction or area of special expertise.
- Providing staff support at the lead agency's request to enhance the latter's interdisciplinary capability.
- Identifying, as early as practicable, any issues that could substantially delay or prevent an agency from granting a permit or other approval that is needed for the transportation project.

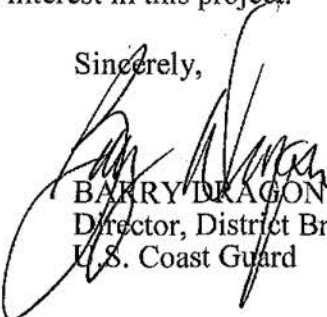
In response to a lead agency's request for assistance in preparing an environmental impact statement, a Cooperating Agency may reply that other program commitments preclude any involvement or their degree of involvement.

As a Cooperating Agency, you should expect the NEPA document to enable you to discharge your jurisdictional responsibilities. Likewise, you have the obligation to tell us if, at any point in the process, your agency's requirements are not being met. We expect that, at the end of the NEPA process, the Environmental Impact Statement will satisfy your NEPA requirements including those related to project alternatives, environmental consequences and mitigation. Further, we intend to utilize the Environmental Impact Statement and our subsequent Record of Decision as our decision-making documents.

We look forward to your response to our request for your agency to be a Cooperating Agency and to working with you on this project. The favor of a reply is requested by 12 August 2010. If you have any questions or would like to discuss in more detail the project or our agencies' respective roles and responsibilities during the preparation of this Environmental Impact Statement, please contact Randall D. Overton, USCG, Federal Permit Agent, at [randall.d.overton@uscg.mil](mailto:randall.d.overton@uscg.mil) or 305-415-6749.

Thank you for your cooperation and interest in this project.

Sincerely,



BARRY DRAGON  
Director, District Bridge Program  
U.S. Coast Guard



U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander (dpb)  
Seventh Coast Guard District

909 SE 1st Ave (Suite 432)  
Miami, FL 33131-3050  
Staff Symbol: dpb  
Phone: 305-415-6749  
Fax: 305-415-6763  
Email: randall.d.overton@uscg.mil

16475/3889  
1932  
July 20, 2010

Col. Paul Grosskruger, District Engineer  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District  
Regulatory Branch  
P.O. Box 4970  
Jacksonville, FL 32232-0019

Re: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency on an Environmental Impact Statement for the  
proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida.

Dear Colonel Grosskruger:

The United States Coast Guard (USCG), in conjunction with Manatee County (County), is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida. In accordance with 40 CFR 1501.6, the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provision of the National Environmental Policy Act, we are requesting you be a Cooperating Agency on this environmental document. This request is based on your Regulatory Jurisdiction. Designation as a Cooperating Agency does not imply that your agency supports the proposed project.

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Your agency's involvement as a Cooperating Agency should entail those areas under its jurisdiction. Responsibilities of a Cooperating Agency include:

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- Providing staff support at the lead agency's request to enhance the latter's interdisciplinary capability.
- Identifying, as early as practicable, any issues that could substantially delay or prevent an agency from granting a permit or other approval that is needed for the transportation project.

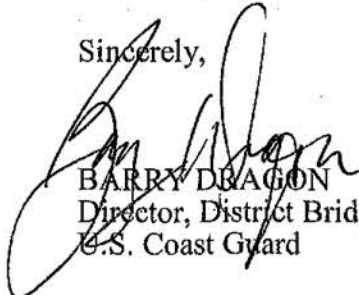
In response to a lead agency's request for assistance in preparing an environmental impact statement, a Cooperating Agency may reply that other program commitments preclude any involvement or their degree of involvement.

As a Cooperating Agency, you should expect the NEPA document to enable you to discharge your jurisdictional responsibilities. Likewise, you have the obligation to tell us if, at any point in the process, your agency's requirements are not being met. We expect that, at the end of the NEPA process, the Environmental Impact Statement will satisfy your NEPA requirements including those related to project alternatives, environmental consequences and mitigation. Further, we intend to utilize the Environmental Impact Statement and our subsequent Record of Decision as our decision-making documents.

We look forward to your response to our request for your agency to be a Cooperating Agency and to working with you on this project. The favor of a reply is requested by 12 August 2010. If you have any questions or would like to discuss in more detail the project or our agencies' respective roles and responsibilities during the preparation of this Environmental Impact Statement, please contact Randall D. Overton, USCG, Federal Permit Agent, at [randall.d.overton@uscg.mil](mailto:randall.d.overton@uscg.mil) or 305-415-6749.

Thank you for your cooperation and interest in this project.

Sincerely,



BARRY DRAGON  
Director, District Bridge Program  
U.S. Coast Guard



U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander (dpb)  
Seventh Coast Guard District

909 SE 1st Ave (Suite 432)  
Miami, FL 33131-3050  
Staff Symbol: dpb  
Phone: 305-415-6749  
Fax: 305-415-6763  
Email: randall.d.overton@uscg.mil

16475/3889  
1932  
July 20, 2010

Mr. David Bernhart Assistant Administrator  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Protected Resources Division  
263 13th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Re: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency on an Environmental Impact Statement for the  
proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida.

Dear Mr. Bernhart:

The United States Coast Guard (USCG), in conjunction with Manatee County (County), is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida. In accordance with 40 CFR 1501.6, the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provision of the National Environmental Policy Act, we are requesting you be a Cooperating Agency on this environmental document. This request is based on your Protected Resources and Habitat Conservation Jurisdiction. Designation as a Cooperating Agency does not imply that your agency supports the proposed project.

The proposed bridge crossing is a priority project in the Financially Feasible Plan of the Sarasota-Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization's (SMMPO) 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan. The project's Web site is <http://www.forthamerbridge.com>. According to the SMMPO, the proposed bridge is needed to provide an alternate north/south route to the east of Interstate Highway 75 (I-75) and enhance emergency service access to northeast Manatee County. Further, a new bridge will serve to improve the level of service to the existing network of north Manatee County roadways as development expands through the Parrish area and northward in Manatee County. The proposed location for the Fort Hamer Bridge is in northeast Manatee County adjacent to Fort Hamer Park and will connect Fort Hamer Road and Upper Manatee River Road. Alternatives under consideration include: (1) Taking no action; and (2) various build alternatives that satisfy the purpose and need. Build alternatives may include low, mid, and high-level fixed bridges, alternatives to the east, west and center of the project corridor, and other alternatives that may result from the scoping process. We are requesting your comments on environmental concerns that you may have related to a new bridge in northeast Manatee County. This includes suggesting analyses and methodologies for use in the EIS or possible sources of data or information we should consider.

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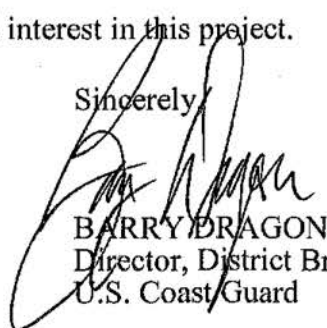
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Thank you for your cooperation and interest in this project.

Sincerely,



BARRY DRAGON  
Director, District Bridge Program  
U.S. Coast Guard



U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

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Coast Guard



Commander (dpb)  
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Fax: 305-415-6763  
Email: randall.d.overton@uscg.mil

16475/3889  
1932  
July 20, 2010

Ms. Linda Walker, Deputy Field Supervisor  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
7915 Baymeadows Way, Suite 200  
Jacksonville, FL 32256-7517

Re: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency on an Environmental Impact Statement for the  
proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida.

Dear Ms. Walker:

The United States Coast Guard (USCG), in conjunction with Manatee County (County), is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida. In accordance with 40 CFR 1501.6, the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provision of the National Environmental Policy Act, we are requesting you be a Cooperating Agency on this environmental document. This request is based on your Protected Resources and Habitat Conservation Jurisdiction. Designation as a Cooperating Agency does not imply that your agency supports the proposed project.

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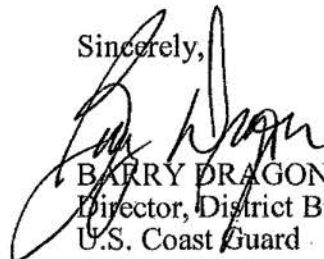
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We look forward to your response to our request for your agency to be a Cooperating Agency and to working with you on this project. The favor of a reply is requested by 12 August 2010. If you have any questions or would like to discuss in more detail the project or our agencies' respective roles and responsibilities during the preparation of this Environmental Impact Statement, please contact Randall D. Overton, USCG, Federal Permit Agent, at [randall.d.overton@uscg.mil](mailto:randall.d.overton@uscg.mil) or 305-415-6749.

Thank you for your cooperation and interest in this project.

Sincerely,



BARRY DRAGON  
Director, District Bridge Program  
U.S. Coast Guard



U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander (dpb)  
Seventh Coast Guard District

909 SE 1st Ave (Suite 432)  
Miami, FL 33131-3050  
Staff Symbol: dpb  
Phone: 305-415-6749  
Fax: 305-415-6763  
Email: randall.d.overton@uscg.mil

16475/3889  
1932  
July 20, 2010

Ms. Jan Rogers  
Director  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 4 - South Florida Office Urban Outreach  
400 N. Congress Avenue, Suite 120  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

Re: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency on an Environmental Impact Statement for the  
proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida.

Dear Ms. Rogers:

The United States Coast Guard (USCG), in conjunction with Manatee County (County), is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida. In accordance with 40 CFR 1501.6, the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provision of the National Environmental Policy Act, we are requesting you be a Cooperating Agency on this environmental document. This request is based on your Regulatory Jurisdiction. Designation as a Cooperating Agency does not imply that your agency supports the proposed project.

The proposed bridge crossing is a priority project in the Financially Feasible Plan of the Sarasota-Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization's (SMMPO) 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan. The project's Web site is <http://www.forthamerbridge.com>. According to the SMMPO, the proposed bridge is needed to provide an alternate north/south route to the east of Interstate Highway 75 (I-75) and enhance emergency service access to northeast Manatee County. Further, a new bridge will serve to improve the level of service to the existing network of north Manatee County roadways as development expands through the Parrish area and northward in Manatee County. The proposed location for the Fort Hamer Bridge is in northeast Manatee County adjacent to Fort Hamer Park and will connect Fort Hamer Road and Upper Manatee River Road. Alternatives under consideration include: (1) Taking no action; and (2) various build alternatives that satisfy the purpose and need. Build alternatives may include low, mid, and high-level fixed bridges, alternatives to the east, west and center of the project corridor, and other alternatives that may result from the scoping process. We are requesting your comments on environmental concerns that you may have related to a new bridge in northeast Manatee County. This includes suggesting analyses and methodologies for use in the EIS or possible sources of data or information we should consider.

Your agency's involvement as a Cooperating Agency should entail those areas under its jurisdiction. Responsibilities of a Cooperating Agency include:

- Participation in the NEPA scoping and environmental review process at the earliest possible time.
- Providing comments on the project's purpose and need, goals and objectives, methodologies, and range of alternatives.
- Assisting in the development of a project coordination plan, including a project schedule.
- Providing (on request of the lead agency) information and assisting with the preparation of environmental analyses including portions of the NEPA documents relevant to your agency's jurisdiction or area of special expertise.
- Providing staff support at the lead agency's request to enhance the latter's interdisciplinary capability.
- Identifying, as early as practicable, any issues that could substantially delay or prevent an agency from granting a permit or other approval that is needed for the transportation project.

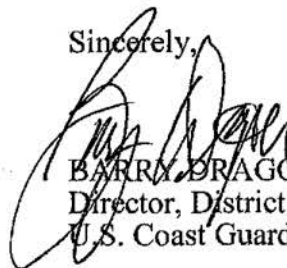
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Thank you for your cooperation and interest in this project.

Sincerely,



BARRY DRAGON  
Director, District Bridge Program  
U.S. Coast Guard



U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander (dpb)  
Seventh Coast Guard District

909 SE 1st Ave (Suite 432)  
Miami, FL 33131-3050  
Staff Symbol: dpb  
Phone: 305-415-6749  
Fax: 305-415-6763  
Email: randall.d.overton@uscg.mil

16475/3889  
1932  
July 20, 2010

Mr. Tom Welborn  
Director  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 4 - South Florida Office  
61 Forsyth Street, SW  
Mail Code 9T25  
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

Re: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency on an Environmental Impact Statement for the  
proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida.

Dear Mr. Welborn:

The United States Coast Guard (USCG), in conjunction with Manatee County (County), is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida. In accordance with 40 CFR 1501.6, the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provision of the National Environmental Policy Act, we are requesting you be a Cooperating Agency on this environmental document. This request is based on your Regulatory Jurisdiction. Designation as a Cooperating Agency does not imply that your agency supports the proposed project.

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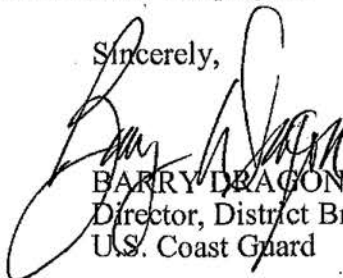
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Thank you for your cooperation and interest in this project.

Sincerely,



BARRY DRAGON  
Director, District Bridge Program  
U.S. Coast Guard



U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander (dpb)  
Seventh Coast Guard District

909 SE 1st Ave (Suite 432)  
Miami, FL 33131-3050  
Staff Symbol: dpb  
Phone: 305-415-6749  
Fax: 305-415-6763  
Email: randall.d.overton@uscg.mil

16475/3889  
1932  
July 20, 2010

Mr. Roy Crabtree Administrator  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Southeast Regional Office  
263 13th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Re: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency on an Environmental Impact Statement for the  
proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida.

Dear Mr. Crabtree:

The United States Coast Guard (USCG), in conjunction with Manatee County (County), is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida. In accordance with 40 CFR 1501.6, the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provision of the National Environmental Policy Act, we are requesting you be a Cooperating Agency on this environmental document. This request is based on your Protected Resources and Habitat Conservation Jurisdiction. Designation as a Cooperating Agency does not imply that your agency supports the proposed project.

The proposed bridge crossing is a priority project in the Financially Feasible Plan of the Sarasota-Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization's (SMMPO) 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan. The project's Web site is <http://www.forthamerbridge.com>. According to the SMMPO, the proposed bridge is needed to provide an alternate north/south route to the east of Interstate Highway 75 (I-75) and enhance emergency service access to northeast Manatee County. Further, a new bridge will serve to improve the level of service to the existing network of north Manatee County roadways as development expands through the Parrish area and northward in Manatee County. The proposed location for the Fort Hamer Bridge is in northeast Manatee County adjacent to Fort Hamer Park and will connect Fort Hamer Road and Upper Manatee River Road. Alternatives under consideration include: (1) Taking no action; and (2) various build alternatives that satisfy the purpose and need. Build alternatives may include low, mid, and high-level fixed bridges, alternatives to the east, west and center of the project corridor, and other alternatives that may result from the scoping process. We are requesting your comments on environmental concerns that you may have related to a new bridge in northeast Manatee County. This includes suggesting analyses and methodologies for use in the EIS or possible sources of data or information we should consider.

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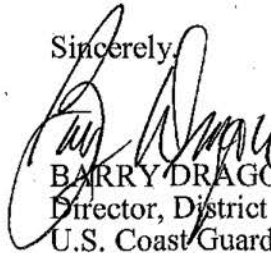
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Thank you for your cooperation and interest in this project.

Sincerely,



BARRY DRAGON  
Director, District Bridge Program  
U.S. Coast Guard



**U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security**

**United States  
Coast Guard**



Commander (dpb)  
Seventh Coast Guard District

909 SE 1st Ave (Suite 432)  
Miami, FL 33131-3050  
Staff Symbol: dpb  
Phone: 305-415-6749  
Fax: 305-415-6763  
Email: randall.d.overton@uscg.mil

16475/3889  
1932  
July 20, 2010

David Rydene, Ph.D.  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Southeast Regional Office  
263 13th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Re: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency on an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida.

Dear Doctor Rydene:

The United States Coast Guard (USCG), in conjunction with Manatee County (County), is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida. In accordance with 40 CFR 1501.6, the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provision of the National Environmental Policy Act, we are requesting you be a Cooperating Agency on this environmental document. This request is based on your Protected Resources and Habitat Conservation Jurisdiction. Designation as a Cooperating Agency does not imply that your agency supports the proposed project.

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- Providing staff support at the lead agency's request to enhance the latter's interdisciplinary capability.
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Thank you for your cooperation and interest in this project.

Sincerely,



BARRY DRAGON  
Director, District Bridge Program  
U.S. Coast Guard





**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Southeast Regional Office

263 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505  
(727) 824-5317; FAX 824-5300

July 27, 2010 F/SER46:DR/mt

Barry Dragon  
Director, District Bridge Program  
United States Coast Guard  
Seventh Coast Guard District  
909 SE 1st Avenue, Suite 432  
Miami, Florida 33131-3050

Dear Mr. Dragon:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has received your letter inviting NMFS to be a cooperating agency on the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River in Manatee County, Florida. While NMFS thanks you for the invitation to be a cooperating agency, we must decline the offer due to manpower limitations. We will have to limit our project activities to participation in conference calls, attending occasional meetings, conducting on-site field investigations, and review of relevant project documents. Thank you again for the invitation. We look forward to coordinating with the Coast Guard on this project.

If you have questions regarding our response please contact me at the letterhead address or by calling (727) 824-5379.

Sincerely,

David Rydene  
Fishery Biologist  
Habitat Conservation Division

cc:  
F/SER4  
F/SER46 - Rydene





DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
10117 PRINCESS PALM AVENUE, SUITE 120  
TAMPA, FLORIDA 33610

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

July 29, 2010

Tampa Regulatory Office  
SAJ-2010-02223 (EIS-JPF)

Mr. Barry Dragon  
Director, District Bridge Program  
United States Coast Guard  
909 SE 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue (Suite 432)  
Miami, Florida 33131-3050


Dear Mr. Dragon:

This letter is written in reference to your correspondence dated July 20, 2010, in which you requested the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to become a cooperating agency during the review and preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Fort Hamer Bridge across the Manatee River, Manatee County, Florida. The Corps agrees to become a cooperating agency with the United States Coast Guard.

The application has been assigned Corps file number SAJ-2010-02223, and the project has been assigned to John Fellows. Should you have any questions, please contact him at the letterhead address or by telephone (813) 769-7067, by fax (813) 769-7061 or by e-mail at John.P.Fellows@usace.army.mil.

The Corps' Jacksonville District Regulatory Division looks forward to working in tandem with your agency. Should you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

  
Stephen R. Sullivan  
Chief, South Permits Branch

Copies furnished:

RD

File

Randall Overton, USCG

(Via electronic mail: randall.d.overton@uscg.mil)





# United States Department of the Interior

## U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

7915 BAYMEADOWS WAY, SUITE 200  
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32256-7517

IN REPLY REFER TO:

FWS Log No. 41910-2010-R-0397

August 24, 2010

Barry Dragon  
Director, District Bridge Program  
U.S. Coast Guard  
909 SE 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue (RM 432)  
Miami, FL 33187

Dear Mr. Dragon,

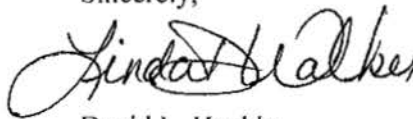
On July 20, 2010 our office received a request from the Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance to conduct an environmental review on the Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge over the Manatee River located in Manatee County, Florida.

To our knowledge, our office has not commented on this proposal through FDOT's Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) system online or in accordance with the section 7 consultation process under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*)

Based on a cursory review of the study area we expect to have comments as this proposal progresses. Our environmental concerns are likely to include potential impacts to submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) in the Manatee River as a result of the construction activities, the shading effects and the project footprint from a new bridge; impacts to Florida manatees during construction; impacts to unique freshwater marshes in the area; increased turbidity, sedimentation and nutrient loading in the Manatee River which is designated as an Outstanding Florida Waterway (OFW); contaminants entering the waterway from road run off; increased road kill; increased residential development and further fragmentation of wildlife habitat in a rural area; new connector roads, and/or road widening and hardening as an indirect result of a new bridge providing access to undeveloped areas.

We look forward to the opportunity to review the draft EIS as well as provide comments through the consultation process. Thank you for allowing us to comment early in the consultation process. We regret that we are unable to participate in the development of the EIS as a cooperating agency.

Sincerely,

  
David L. Hankla  
Field Supervisor

C-31

**Pride, Tom**

---

**From:** Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil on behalf of Overton, Randall D CIV  
<Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 24, 2013 10:47 AM  
**To:** Pride, Tom; Peate, Martin  
**Subject:** FW: ESA Section 7 Consultation Request and EFH Consultation Request for proposed bridge construction Manatee River  
**Attachments:** NMFS ESA Section 7and EFH consultation request.pdf; WER Supplemental Update\_19July2013.pdf; BA Supplemental Update\_19July2013.pdf

FYSA - I sent consultation request to NMFS

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Overton, Randall D CIV  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 24, 2013 10:46 AM  
**To:** 'nmfs.ser.esa.consultations@noaa.gov'  
**Cc:** Sugarman, Shelly CIV; Dragon, Barry CIV; Mullen, Kevin P CTR  
**Subject:** ESA Section 7 Consultation Request and EFH Consultation Request for proposed bridge construction Manatee River

Please find attached a request for ESA Section 7 and EFH Consultations for a proposed bridge construction project across the Manatee River. The proposed new bridge would be constructed across the Manatee River approximately 15 miles upstream from the mouth of the river. The bridge and associated roadway would be between Upper Manatee River Road (south of the Manatee River) to Fort Hamer Road (north of the Manatee River), near Parrish, Manatee County, Florida. Latitude 27o 31.165' N, Longitude 82o 25.720' W.

The attached letter " NMFS ESA Section 7and EFH consultation request" contains web links to the Wetland Evaluation Report (WER) and Biological Opinion (BA) prepared for the proposed project. WER and BA supplemental updates which slightly refine the WER and BA are attached to this email.

Randall Overton  
Federal Permit Agent USCG  
909 SE 1st Ave Suite 432  
Miami, FL 33131  
(305) 205-0795 Cell  
(305) 415-6736 Office



U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander  
Seventh Coast Guard District

909 S. E. First Avenue (Rm 432)  
Miami, FL 33131  
Staff Symbol: (dpb)  
Phone: (305) 415-6736  
Fax: (305) 415-6763  
Email: randall.d.overtont@uscg.mil

16450  
July 24, 2013

National Marine Fisheries Service  
Southeast Regional Office  
263 13th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701-5505

Dear Sir or Madam:

Through this letter, the U.S. Coast Guard wishes to initiate consultation in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and to initiate consultation under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) for Essential Fish Habitat.

The Coast Guard is the Lead Federal Agency (LFA) for a proposed bridge construction project in Manatee County, Florida. A Wetlands Evaluation Report (WER) and Biological Assessment (BA) were completed in conjunction with the proposed project. The WER and BA were included as appendices D and E of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the project (dated June 21, 2013). The DEIS can be found at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg551/CGLeadProjects.asp>

Direct link to the WER:

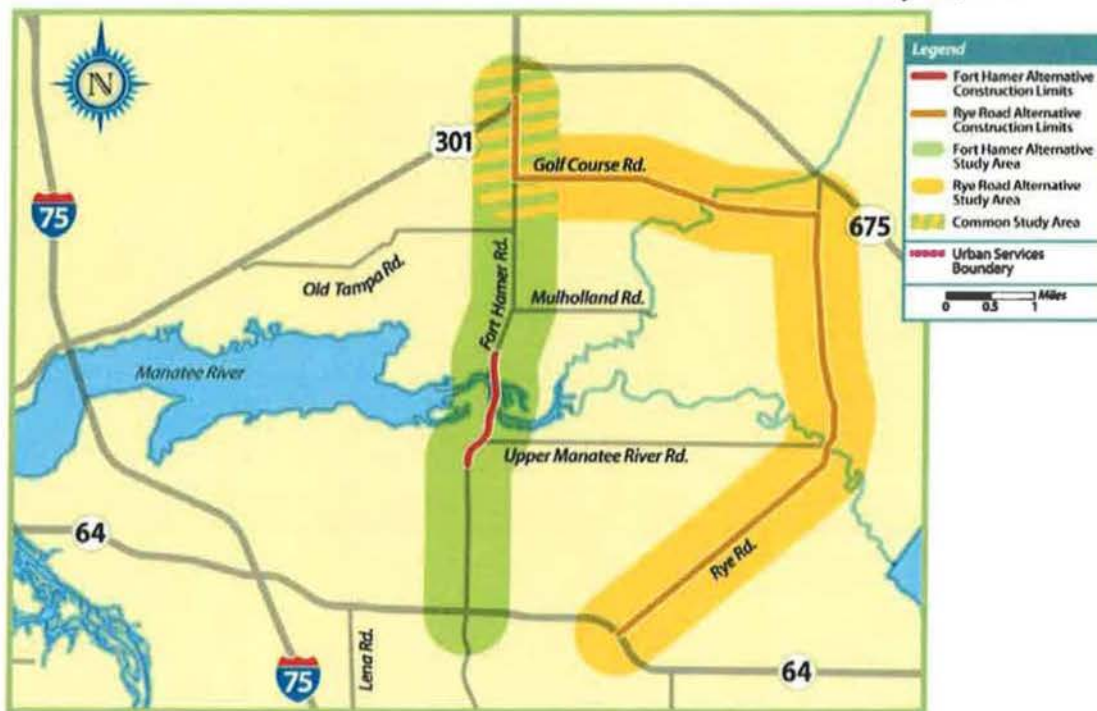
[http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg551/CGLeadProjects\\_files/Fort%20Hamer%20DEIS%20June%202013/Appendix\\_D.pdf](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg551/CGLeadProjects_files/Fort%20Hamer%20DEIS%20June%202013/Appendix_D.pdf)

Direct link to the BA:

[http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg551/CGLeadProjects\\_files/Fort%20Hamer%20DEIS%20June%202013/Appendix\\_E.pdf](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg551/CGLeadProjects_files/Fort%20Hamer%20DEIS%20June%202013/Appendix_E.pdf)

Subsequent to publication of the DEIS, WER and the BA, in June, further refinements of the project design have necessitated minor revisions to the WER and the BA. The WER supplemental update and BA supplemental update are attached to the email which transmitted this letter.

The DEIS studies three alternatives. In addition to the No Build Alternative, two build alternatives were analyzed; the Fort Hamer Road Alternative, and the Rye Road Alternative. These two build alternatives are depicted on the next page.



Manatee County has submitted a preliminary bridge permit application for the Fort Hamer Alternative as their Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Therefore, this consultation request will focus on the impacts reasonably likely to be associated with the Fort Hamer Road Alternative (LPA).

The Fort Hamer Alternative consists of a new two-lane bridge crossing the Manatee River connecting the existing two-lane Upper Manatee River Road with the existing two-lane Fort Hamer Road. The construction limits of this alternative extend from just north of the back entrance of the Waterlefe subdivision to the north side of the Manatee River, a total of approximately 1.4 miles. The proposed bridge length is 2,570 feet. The study area for this alternative extends south to SR 64 and north to US 301 (6 miles) because of the increased traffic between these points that would result from this alternative.

### **Wetland and Essential Fish Habitat Impact:**

Permanent unavoidable wetland impacts of the LPA occur in four wetland sites and total 4.34 acres (ac) (2.05 ac fill, 1.01 ac shading, 1.28 ac secondary); see Supplemental WER Update 2. The impacted wetland types include scrub, mixed hardwood swamp, salt marsh, mangrove, and stream (bottomland).

Temporary impacts to wetlands: It is anticipated that a temporary work trestle would be constructed across portions of the Manatee River to facilitate construction of the new bridge. It is anticipated that the temporary trestle would be 28 feet wide and would temporarily impact approximately 0.62 acres of wetland due to shading. Upon completion of construction the work trestle would be removed in its entirety.



Impacts to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) with the LPA would total 2.91 ac of EFH (1.01 ac shading and 0.15 ac fill), principally to saltmarsh and bottomland, see Supplemental WER Update 9.

Compensatory wetland mitigation described in the proposed conceptual mitigation plan consists of onsite wetland creation by excavation and planting at three riverbank locations to provide approximately 2.2 ac of mixed hardwood swamp, 2.1 ac of tidal saltmarsh, and 0.2 ac of mangrove wetlands.

### **Proposed Construction Methodology and Potential Impacts:**

(Excerpted from the Supplemental Update to BA– Update 1)

The Manatee River provides suitable habitat for the West Indian manatee in the Fort Hamer Alternative. Although no manatees were observed during field reviews, FNAI, FWS, and FWC have indicated that manatees are known to frequent the Manatee River and local residents have reported sightings of manatees in the vicinity of the Fort Hamer Alternative. The Manatee River within both build alternatives is designated as Critical Habitat for the manatee below the Lake Manatee Dam.

Potential threats to the manatee as a result of implementation of the Fort Hamer Alternative include collision with construction vessels and acoustic impacts during construction. The segment of river immediately downstream of the proposed location of the Fort Hamer Alternative Bridge is a posted “Idle Speed/No Wake” zone. In addition to observing all posted speed zones in the river, all construction vessels will be required to operate at “Idle Speed/No Wake” speeds within 0.5-mile upstream and downstream of the construction site. Additionally, the selected construction contractor will be required to implement the *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work* (Appendix F) for all construction activities within the river.

Acoustical effects on marine mammals, including manatees and dolphins – both of which have the potential to occur within the Fort Hamer Alternative Study Area, are an increasing concern with coastal and marine construction activities. Acoustic sources during bridge construction include blasting, boat motors, and installation of bridge piles. Blasting can be a significant acoustic source during bridge demolition; however, since demolition is not part of the Fort Hamer Alternative, no blasting will occur.

The use of motorized tugboats and support vessels will be required for construction of the Fort Hamer Alternative. However, the commitment to operate all vessels at “Idle Speed/No Wake” speeds will minimize potential motorized noise impacts to manatees and other marine fauna present in the river.

The installation of bridge pilings with hydraulic hammers (i.e., pile-driving) can generate acoustic vibrations within the water column. Although detailed construction methodologies for the Fort Hamer Alternative have not been developed, it is likely that many, if not all, of the bridge support pilings would be driven with a hydraulic hammer. A total of 54 24-in<sup>2</sup> pre-

stressed concrete pilings will be installed in the river channel, and an additional 137 24-in<sup>2</sup> concrete pilings will be installed in the adjacent wetlands and shallow embayment between Wetland 3 and Wetland 4 (part of River 1). To minimize potential adverse effects to manatees and dolphins observers will be in place to observe the river during all pile-driving operations. If any manatees or dolphins are observed in the river within a 0.25-mile radius of the hammer location, pile-driving operations will cease until the animal(s) has exited the 0.25-mile buffer on its own. To facilitate observation of manatees and dolphins (and to accommodate nearby human residents), all pile-driving activities will be conducted during daylight hours only. Finally, floating turbidity barriers with skirt lengths sufficient to reach the river bottom (approximately 12 feet maximum) will be placed around each piling during pile-driving operations. In addition to controlling turbidity, the barriers will lessen, though not eliminate, the acoustical vibrations generated during pile driving. With these commitments, it has been determined that the Fort Hamer Alternative "may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect" (MANLAA) the West Indian manatee.

### **Listed Species Impacts** (information excerpted from BA):

#### **Plants**

Although federally- and state-listed plant species have been documented within Manatee County, none have been documented within 1 mile of either alternative and none were observed during field reviews. Based on this information, it has been determined that both the will have no effect on any federally- or state-listed plant species.

#### **Fish**

##### **Mangrove Rivulus**

##### *State Species of Special Concern*

While suitable habitat exists for the mangrove rivulus within the LPA, none were observed during the April 2010 field reviews and none have been documented within 1 mile of the alternative. Total impacts (shading, fill, and secondary) to mangrove habitat will be 0.20 acre. The conceptual wetlands mitigation for the project will result in the creation of 0.20 acres of mangrove habitat. (See the Wetlands Evaluation Report in Appendix D of the DEIS for a description of the proposed conceptual mitigation.) Therefore, a determination of MANLAA was made for the mangrove rivulus.

#### **Reptiles and Amphibians:**

##### **Eastern Indigo Snake**

##### *Federally Threatened*

While no eastern indigo snakes were observed during field reviews, suitable habitat for this species does exist within both build alternatives. The FWS and FWC approved standard protection measures for the eastern indigo snake (Appendix E of the BA) will be implemented during the clearing and construction phases for the selected alternative. As a result of this commitment, a determination of MANLAA was made for the eastern indigo snake.



### **Gopher Tortoise and Commensal Species**

#### *State Threatened/Species of Special Concern*

Suitable habitat is available within the LPA for the gopher tortoise (state-listed as Threatened), Florida mouse (SSC), gopher frog (SSC), and pine snake (SSC). Gopher tortoise burrows were observed north of the Manatee River adjacent to the. The Florida mouse, gopher frog, and pine snake have not been documented within 1 mile of the LPA and none were observed during field reviews. Approximately 17 acres of suitable habitat (uplands) within the LPA construction limits will need to be surveyed for the presence of gopher tortoise burrows prior to construction. If gopher tortoises or their burrows are found in or within 25 feet of the construction limits of the selected alternative, Manatee County will coordinate with the FWC to secure permits needed to relocate the gopher tortoises and associated commensal species prior to construction. With this commitment, a determination of MANLAA was made for the gopher tortoise, Florida mouse, gopher frog, and pine snake.

### **Birds**

#### **Florida Scrub Jay**

##### *Federally Threatened*

Suitable habitat for the Florida scrub jay does not exist within the Study Area and no scrub jays are reported within the study area. For these reasons, implementation of the LPA will have no effect on the Florida scrub jay.

#### **Other Wading Birds**

##### *State Species of Special Concern*

No wading bird rookeries are located within either alternative; however, the little blue heron, reddish egret, snowy egret, limpkin, tricolored heron, white ibis, and roseate spoonbill have the potential to forage in the drainage ditches and wetlands within both of the alternatives. A little blue heron, white ibis, snowy egret, and tricolored heron were observed in the LPA. The primary concern for impacts to these wading birds is the loss of habitat (wetlands) for foraging. All wetland impacts will be mitigated to prevent a net loss of wetland functions and values. Because lost foraging habitat would be replaced through wetland mitigation, a determination of no effect was made for these wading bird species.

#### **Florida Burrowing Owl**

##### *State Species of Special Concern*

Potentially suitable nesting and foraging habitat for the Florida burrowing owl exists within the limits of both build alternatives. However, no burrowing owls or their burrows were observed during field reviews and none have been documented within 1 mile of the two build alternatives. To avoid potential impacts to this species, Manatee County will resurvey appropriate upland habitats within the study area of the selected alternative for burrowing owls or their burrows prior to construction. If any burrows are located in the study area, Manatee County will coordinate with FWC to develop and implement the appropriate protection criteria prior to construction. With this commitment, a determination of no effect was made for the Florida burrowing owl.

### **West Indian Manatee**

#### *Federally Endangered*

The Manatee River provides suitable habitat for the West Indian manatee in the LPA. The segment of river immediately downstream of the proposed bridge location is a posted "Idle Speed/No Wake" zone. In addition to observing all posted speed zones in the river, all construction vessels will be required to operate at "Idle Speed/No Wake" speeds within 0.5-mile upstream and downstream of the construction site. Additionally, the selected construction contractor will be required to implement the *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work* (Appendix F) for all construction activities within the river.

Acoustical effects on marine mammals, including manatees and dolphins – both of which have the potential to occur within the LPA Study Area, are an increasing concern with coastal and marine construction activities. Acoustic sources during bridge construction may include blasting, boat motors, and installation of bridge supports (pile-driving). Blasting can be a significant acoustic source during bridge demolition; however, since demolition is not part of the proposed action, no blasting will occur.

The use of motorized tugboats and support vessels will be required for construction of the LPA. However, the commitment to operate all vessels at "Idle Speed/No Wake" speeds will minimize potential motorized noise impacts to manatees and other marine fauna present in the river. To minimize potential adverse effects to manatees and dolphins observers will be in place to observe the river during all pile-driving operations. If any manatees or dolphins are observed in the river within a 0.25-mile radius of the hammer location, pile-driving operations will cease until the animal(s) has exited the 0.25-mile buffer on its own. To facilitate observation of manatees and dolphins (and to accommodate nearby human residents), all pile-driving activities will be conducted during daylight hours only. Also, floating turbidity barriers with skirt lengths sufficient to reach the river bottom (approximately 12 feet maximum) will be placed around each piling during pile-driving operations. In addition to controlling turbidity, the barriers will lessen, though not eliminate, the acoustical vibrations generated during pile driving.

### **Wood Stork**

#### *Federally Endangered*

To compensate for the loss of SFH, implementation of the selected alternative 1) will include creation of habitat and foraging function equal, at a minimum, to that being impacted; 2) will not be contrary to the FWS Habitat Management Guidelines for the Wood Stork in the Southeast Region (Ogden, 1990), and 3) will be in accordance with the Clean Water Act, Section 404(b)1 guidelines.

### **Gopher Tortoise and Commensal Species**

#### *State Threatened/Species of Special Concern*

Suitable habitat is available within the LPA for the gopher tortoise (state-listed as threatened), Florida mouse (SSC), gopher frog (SSC), and pine snake (SSC). Gopher tortoise burrows were observed north of the Manatee River adjacent to the LPA. The Florida mouse, gopher frog, and pine snake have not been documented within 1 mile of the LPA, and none were observed during field reviews. Approximately 17 acres of suitable habitat (uplands) within the LPA construction



### **Crested Caracara**

#### *Federally Threatened*

The LPA is not located within the FWS consultation area for the crested caracara; however, suitable foraging and marginal nesting habitat exist. No crested caracara were observed during field reviews and none have been documented within 1 mile of this alternative. A determination has been made that the LPA will have no effect on the crested caracara.

### **Southeastern American Kestrel**

#### *State Threatened*

While suitable nesting and foraging habitat exists for the southeastern American kestrel within the limits of both alternatives, no kestrels were observed during the field reviews. Due to its mobility and ability to use adjacent areas for nesting and foraging, it has been determined that LPA will have no effect the southeastern American kestrel.

### **Florida Sandhill Crane**

#### *State Threatened*

Suitable nesting and foraging habitat is available within both build alternatives for the Florida sandhill crane. Sandhill cranes were observed within both build alternatives during field reviews. For both of the alternatives, wetland impacts would be mitigated to prevent a net loss of wetland functions and values. In addition, Manatee County will resurvey the selected alternative's study area for Florida sandhill crane nests prior to construction. If Florida sandhill crane nests are found within the study area, Manatee County will coordinate with the FWC to ensure project construction will not adversely impact this species. With this commitment, a determination of no effect was made for the Florida sandhill crane.

### **Wood Stork**

#### *Federally Endangered*

Suitable nesting and foraging habitat for the wood stork is available within both build alternatives. Based on FWS data (2010a), both alternatives are located within the 15-mile CFA of two wood stork rookeries (see Figure 5). In order to make a determination of the build alternatives' potential effects on the wood stork, the construction impacts resulting from both build alternatives were assessed using the Wood Stork Effect Determination Key (FWS, 2010b). A review of FNAI and FWS information indicates that neither alternative is located within 2,500 feet of an active wood stork colony site; however, both alternatives are located within the CFA of two active wood stork nesting colonies. Either build alternative would impact more than 0.5 acre of suitable foraging habitat (SFH) (0.5 acre is the threshold for a "not likely to adversely affect" determination). The LPA would result in fill and shading impacts to 4.68 acres of SFH. To minimize adverse effects to the wood stork, the FWS recommends compensation be provided for impacts to foraging habitat (FWS, 2010b). Wetlands offered as compensation should be of the same hydroperiod and located within the CFAs of the affected wood stork colonies. To compensate for the loss of SFH, implementation of the selected alternative 1) will include creation of habitat and foraging function equal, at a minimum, to that being impacted; 2) will not be contrary to the FWS Habitat Management Guidelines for the Wood Stork in the Southeast Region (Ogden, 1990), and 3) will be in accordance with the Clean Water Act, Section 404(b)1 guidelines. Based on this assessment, and with this commitment, a determination of MANLAA was made for the wood stork.

### **Brown Pelican**

#### *State Species of Special Concern*

Suitable nesting and foraging habitat exists for the brown pelican within the LPA and brown pelicans were observed flying over this alternative during the April 2010 field reviews. However, due to its mobility and ability to use adjacent surface waters and proposed mitigation sites for foraging, it has been determined that the LPA will have no effect on the brown pelican. Suitable nesting and foraging habitat does not exist for the brown pelican within the Rye Road Alternative. Therefore, it has been determined that the Rye Road Alternative will have no effect on the brown pelican.

### **Mammals:**

#### **Florida Mouse**

See description under Gopher Tortoise and Commensal Species above.

#### **Sherman's Fox Squirrel**

##### *State Species of Special Concern*

While suitable nesting and foraging habitat exists for the Sherman's fox squirrel within both build alternatives, none were observed during the field reviews and none have been documented within 1 mile of either alternative. Due to its mobility and ability to use adjacent upland habitats for nesting and foraging, it has been determined that both the Fort Hamer Alternative and the Rye Road Alternative will have no effect on the Sherman's fox squirrel.

#### **West Indian Manatee**

##### *Federally Endangered*

The Manatee River provides suitable habitat for the West Indian manatee in the LPA. Though no manatees were observed during field reviews, FNAI, FWS, and FWC have indicated that manatees are known to frequent the Manatee River and local residents have reported sightings of manatees in the vicinity of the LPA. The Manatee River within both alternatives is designated as Critical Habitat for the manatee below the Lake Manatee Dam. To minimize potential adverse impacts to the manatee as a result of construction of the LPA, Manatee County will utilize the FWS and FWC approved *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work* (Appendix F) for all construction activities within the Manatee River. Manatee County will also coordinate with the FWS and the FWC to determine the appropriate, site-specific manatee protection measures to be implemented during construction (see above). With these commitments, a determination of MANLAA was made for the West Indian manatee

### **Proposed Avoidance, Minimization, Mitigation Measures:**

#### **Eastern Indigo Snake**

##### *Federally Threatened*

While no eastern indigo snakes were observed during field reviews, suitable habitat for this species does exist within both build alternatives. The FWS and FWC approved standard protection measures for the eastern indigo snake (Appendix E-of the BA) will be implemented during the clearing and construction phases for the selected alternative.



16450  
July 24, 2013

limits will need to be surveyed for the presence of gopher tortoise burrows prior to construction. If gopher tortoises or their burrows are found in or within 25 feet of the construction limits of the selected alternative, Manatee County will coordinate with the FWC to secure permits needed to relocate the gopher tortoises and associated commensal species prior to construction

### **Summary of Coast Guard Determinations:**

Based on the information contained in the BA and WER, including the supplemental updates, the Coast Guard determines:

For Federally-listed species, the listed species effect determination for the LPA (Fort Hamer Road Alternative) includes “may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect” or MANLAA, for three Federally-listed faunal species (Eastern indigo snake, West Indian manatee [Critical Habitat], and wood stork). A determination of No Effect was applied to one floral species and three avian species (Florida goldenaster, Florida scrub jay, Florida grasshopper sparrow, and crested caracara). See Appendix E (BA), Table 8, page E-49.

The listed species effect determination for this alternative includes “may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect” MANLAA for four Florida state-listed faunal species (gopher tortoise, pine snake, Florida mouse, and gopher frog). A determination of No Effect was applied to nine floral species and thirteen faunal species. See Appendix E (BA), Table 8, page E-49, 50.

Sincerely,

OVERTON.RANDALL, Digitally signed by OVERTON.RANDALL  
D.1111176970  
DN: cn=US, o=U.S. Government, ou=DoD, email=FR,  
serial=1000, c=US, email=OVERTON.RANDALL.D.1111176970  
Date: 2013.07.24 10:41:52 -0400

RANDALL D. OVERTON  
Bridge Management Specialist  
U.S. Coast Guard

Enclosure: Wetland Evaluation Report (WER) as an embedded link  
Biological Assessment (BA) as an embedded link  
WER Supplemental update as an email attachment  
BA Supplemental update as an email attachment

Copy: CGHQ-BRG-2 as an email

**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
U.S. COAST GUARD**

**PROPOSED NEW BRIDGE ACROSS THE MANATEE RIVER, MILE 15.0,  
AT PARRISH, MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**SUPPLEMENTAL UPDATE  
TO  
WETLANDS EVALUATION REPORT  
(JUNE 2013)**

**SUPPLEMENT UPDATE PREPARED  
JULY 19, 2013**

**OVERVIEW:** In June 2013 Manatee County, in conjunction with the United States Coast Guard, prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to document a study of proposed improvements to north/south traffic movements in eastern Manatee County. For the purposes of the DEIS, two build alternatives were evaluated (in addition to a No-Build Alternative). Appendix D of the DEIS contains a Wetlands Evaluation Report (WER) which documents and describes existing wetland and surface water habitats found within the study area for each build alternative and assesses the potential wetland and surface water impacts associated with each build alternative. Since publication of the DEIS and WER, additional design details of the preferred alternative (the Fort Hamer Alternative) have become available and allow refinement of the wetland impacts that would result from implementation of the Fort Hamer Alternative. This Supplemental Update presents the revised wetland impacts, including impacts to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), and the calculation of functional loss associated with these impacts pursuant to the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM).



**Update 1:** Section 3.1, page 3-1. The following wetland impact minimization measure is added to the bullet list:

- For the Fort Hamer Alternative, the bridge supports have been consciously located outside of seagrass areas.

**Update 2:** Section 3.2.1. The entire section is revised as follows:

### 3.2.1 FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE

Because a temporary work trestle may be used to construct this alternative, the potential wetland impacts have been separated into permanent and temporary impacts.

#### Permanent Impacts

**Table 7** summarizes the unavoidable permanent wetland impacts that would result from implementation of the Fort Hamer Alternative. A total of 3.06 acres of wetlands would be directly impacted by the construction of this alternative; this includes 2.05 acres of dredge/fill impacts and 1.01 acres of shading impacts ( $2.05 + 1.01 = 3.06$ ). An additional 1.28 acres of wetlands are considered to have secondary impacts based on SWFWMD criteria. Thus, the Fort Hamer Alternative would result in 4.34 acres of permanent wetland impacts ( $3.06 + 1.28 = 4.34$ ). All of these impacts would require compensatory mitigation.

**TABLE 7**  
**PERMANENT WETLAND IMPACT SUMMARY – FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE**

Wetland	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>1</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>2</sup>	Description	Direct Impact Acres		Secondary Impact Acres	Total Impact Acres
				Dredge/ Fill	Shading		
Wetland 1	617	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	0.50	0.00	0.14	0.64
	631	PSS1C	Wetland Scrub	1.48	0.00	0.05	1.53
	Sub-total Wetland 1			1.98	0.00	0.19	2.17
Wetland 2	631	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	0.01	0.10	0.04	0.15
	642	E2EM1P	Saltmarsh	0.01	0.12	0.22	0.35
	Sub-total Wetland 2			0.02	0.22	0.26	0.50
Wetland 3	612	E2SS3N	Mangroves	0.01	0.05	0.05	0.11
	615	PFO1P	Stream & Lake Swamp (Bottomland)	0.01	0.21	0.22	0.44
	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	0.03	0.50	0.51	1.04
	Sub-total Wetland 3			0.05	0.76	0.78	1.59
Wetland 4	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	0.0003	0.03	0.06	0.09
	Sub-total Wetland 4			0.0003	0.03	0.06	0.09
Total				2.05	1.01	1.28	4.34

Totals may not add due to rounding.

Shading impacts from low bridges (i.e., bridges with a height to width ratio of less than 0.7) have been shown to result in decreased vegetative growth beneath the bridge (Broome *et al.*, 2005). Approximately 48 percent of the proposed Fort Hamer Alternative bridge would have a height-to-width ratio of 0.7, including the structure over the saltmarsh surrounding the peninsula between the north and south shorelines of the river. The remaining 52 percent of the bridge would have a height-to-width ratio between 0.4 and 0.7. The extent of wetland shading for the Fort Hamer Alternative bridge would be further reduced by the north/south orientation of the bridge, which allows more sunlight beneath the bridge in the early morning and late afternoon hours.

Sparse (less than ten percent cover) patches of widgeon grass occur beneath the proposed Fort Hamer Alternative bridge, along the north bank of the main river channel adjacent to Wetland 3. Reduced productivity of the widgeon grass is possible in this area due to shading; however, the bridge structure would be approximately 32 feet above the water surface at this location. For this reason, and because of the north-south alignment of the structure, the total impact to widgeon grass as a result of shading is expected to be *de minimus*.

#### **Temporary Impacts**

It is anticipated that a temporary work trestle would be constructed across the Manatee River as part of this alternative. Design details of the trestle would be determined by the contractor (yet to be selected); however, the typical section would be designed based on the weight bearing capacity needed to support the construction equipment. A similar structure used on a recent construction project consisted of a 28-foot wide timber deck structure supported on steel pipe pilings and steel cross-beam supports. The trestle would be constructed adjacent and parallel to the permanent, two-lane bridge and would remain in place until construction of the bridge deck is completed.

A 28-foot wide trestle would result in 0.62 acre of temporary shading impacts to vegetated wetlands and temporary *de minimus* fill impacts to wetlands and the open water portion of the Manatee River. It is anticipated that a temporary trestle would create the least amount of impacts to the mangroves, saltmarshes, and shallow portions of the Manatee River compared to other construction methodologies. Construction and use of the temporary trestle should result in insignificant, temporary wetland impacts that would restore naturally after the structure is removed.

**Update 3:** Section 3.3, Table 9, pages 3-6 and 3-7. Table 9 is revised as shown below.



**TABLE 9**  
**REPRESENTATIVE UMAM SCORES<sup>1</sup> FOR WETLANDS (FOR FILL/SHADE IMPACTS)**

Wetland	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>2</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>3</sup>	Description	Location and Landscape Support		Water Environment		Community Structure		Score (sum/30)		Delta
				Current	With	Current	With	Current	With	Current	With	
Fort Hamer Alternative												
Wetland 1 <sup>4</sup>	617 (Fill)	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	4	0	7	0	8	0	0.63	0	0.63
	631 (Fill)	PSS1C	Wetland Scrub	4	0	6	0	7	0	0.57	0	0.57
Wetland 2	631 (Fill)	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	6	0	4	0	4	0	0.47	0	0.47
	631 (Shade)			6	5	4	3	4	0	0.47	0.27	0.20
	642 (Fill)	E2EM1P	Saltmarsh	6	0	8	0	7	0	0.70	0	0.70
	642 (Shade)			6	5	8	7	7	0	0.70	0.40	0.30
Wetland 3	612 (Fill)	E2SS3N	Mangroves	7	0	8	0	8	0	0.77	0	0.77
	612 (Shade)			7	6	8	6	8	0	0.77	0.40	0.37
	615 (Fill)	PFO1P	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	7	0	8	0	7	0	0.73	0	0.73
	615 (Shade)			7	6	8	6	7	0	0.73	0.40	0.33
	642 (Fill)	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	7	0	8	0	8	0	0.77	0	0.77
	642 (Shade)			7	6	8	6	8	0	0.77	0.40	0.37
Wetland 4	642 (Fill)	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh (Shoreline)	5	0	8	0	6	0	0.63	0	0.63
	642 (Shade)			5	4	8	7	6	0	0.63	0.37	0.27
Rye Road Alternative												
Wetland 5	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	5	4	7	6	4	0	0.53	0.33	0.20
Wetland 6	618	PSS1C	Willow	3	0	5	0	5	0	0.43	0.00	0.43
Wetland 7	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	5	4	4	3	4	0	0.43	0.23	0.20
Wetland 8	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	5	4	7	6	6	0	0.60	0.33	0.27
Wetland 9	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	5	4	4	3	7	0	0.53	0.23	0.30
Wetland 10	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	7	0	7	0	7	0	0.70	0.00	0.70
Wetland 11	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1C	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	3	2	7	6	7	0	0.57	0.27	0.30
Wetland 12	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1C	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	3	2	7	6	7	0	0.57	0.27	0.30
Wetland 13	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1J	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	3	2	6	5	6	0	0.50	0.23	0.27

*Continued on next page*

Wetland	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>2</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>3</sup>	Description	Location and Landscape Support		Water Environment		Community Structure		Score (sum/30)		Delta
				Current	With	Current	With	Current	With	Current	With	
Wetland 14	615	PFO1J	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	7	0	7	0	6	0	0.67	0.00	0.67
Wetland 15	630	PFO1C	Wetland Forested Mixed	7	0	8	0	7	0	0.73	0.00	0.73

<sup>1</sup> UMAM scores have not been approved by permitting agencies and are subject to change during the permitting process.

<sup>2</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.

<sup>4</sup> Assumes no mitigation required for impacts to open water portion of Wetland 1 (FLUCFCS 530 – Pond) because this pond is being incorporated into the proposed surface water management system. No mitigation is required for shading to unvegetated open surface waters.

**Update 4:** Section 3.3, Table 10, page 3-8. Table 10 is revised as shown below.



**TABLE 10**  
**REPRESENTATIVE UMAM SCORES<sup>(1)</sup> FOR WETLANDS**  
**(FOR SECONDARY IMPACTS)**

Wetland	FLUCFCS <sup>(2)</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>(3)</sup>	Description	Location & Landscape Support		Water Environment		Community Structure		Score (sum/30)		Delta
				Current	With	Current	With	Current	With	Current	With	
Wetland 1	617	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	4	3	7	7	8	8	0.63	0.60	0.03
	631	PSS1C	Wetland Scrub	4	3	6	6	7	7	0.57	0.54	0.03
Wetland 2	631	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	6	5	4	4	4	4	0.46	0.43	0.04
	642	E2EM1P	Saltmarsh	6	5	8	8	7	7	0.70	0.67	0.03
Wetland 3	612	E2SS3N	Mangroves	7	6	8	8	8	8	0.77	0.73	0.04
	615	PFO1P	Stream & Lake Swamp (Bottomland)	7	6	8	8	7	7	0.73	0.70	0.03
	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	7	6	8	8	8	8	0.77	0.73	0.04
Wetland 4	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh (Shoreline)	5	4	8	8	6	6	0.63	0.60	0.03

1 - UMAM scores have not been approved by permitting agencies and are subject to change during the permitting process.

2 - Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), *Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System Handbook* (FLUCFCS) (Third edition, 1999).

3 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States* (Cowardin, et al., 1979).

**Update 5:** Section 3.3, Table 11, page 3-9 and 3-10. Table 11 is revised as shown below.

**TABLE 11**  
**UMAM SUMMARY FOR DREDGE/FILL/SHADE WETLAND IMPACTS**

Wetland	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>1</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>2</sup>	Description	Delta	Impact Acres	Functional Loss
Fort Hamer Alternative						
Wetland 1	617	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	0.63 fill	0.50	0.32
	631	PSS1C	Wetland Scrub	0.57 fill	1.48	0.84
	Sub-total – Wetland 1				1.98	1.16
Wetland 2	631	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	0.47 fill 0.20 shade	0.009 0.103	0.004 0.021
	642	E2EM1P	Saltmarsh	0.70 fill 0.30 shade	0.009 0.116	0.006 0.035
	Sub-total – Wetland 2				0.24	0.07
Wetland 3	612	E2SS3N	Mangroves	0.77 fill 0.37 shade	0.005 0.054	0.004 0.020
	615	PFO1P	Stream & Lake Swamp (Bottomland)	0.73 fill 0.33 shade	0.009 0.214	0.007 0.071
	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	0.77 fill 0.37 shade	0.034 0.497	0.026 0.184
	Sub-total – Wetland 3				0.81	0.31
Wetland 4	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh (Shoreline)	0.63 fill 0.27 shade	0.0003 0.027	0.0002 0.007
	Sub-total – Wetland 4				0.03	0.01
Total – Fort Hamer Alternative					3.06	1.56
Rye Road Alternative						
Wetland 5	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	0.20	0.06	0.01
Wetland 6	618	PSS1C	Willow	0.43	0.19	0.08
Wetland 7	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	0.20	0.03	0.01
Wetland 8	510	PUB2Jx	Stream (Channelized)	0.27	0.08	0.02
Wetland 9	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.30	0.07	0.02
Wetland 10	615	PFO1C	Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.70	0.61	0.43
Wetland 11	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1C	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.30	0.20	0.06
Wetland 12	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1C	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.30	0.40	0.12

*Continued on next page*



Wetland	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>1</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>2</sup>	Description	Delta	Impact Acres	Functional Loss
Wetland 13	510/615	R2UB2/PFO1J	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.27	0.22	0.06
Wetland 14	615	PFO1J	Stream and Stream Swamp (Bottomland)	0.67	0.14	0.09
Wetland 15	630	PFO1C	Wetland Forested Mixed	0.73	0.52	0.38
<i>Total Functional Loss – Rye Road Alternative</i>					2.52	1.28

<sup>1</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.

**Update 6:** Section 3.3, Table 12, page 3-11. Table 12 is revised as shown below.

**TABLE 12**  
**UMAM SUMMARY FOR FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE SECONDARY WETLAND IMPACTS**

Wetland	FLUCFCS Classification <sup>1</sup>	FWS Classification <sup>2</sup>	Description	Delta	Impact Acres	Functional Loss
Wetland 1	617	PFO1C	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	0.03	0.14	0.004
	631	PSS1C	Wetland Scrub	0.03	0.046	0.001
	Sub-total – Wetland 1				0.19	0.005
Wetland 2	631	E2SS3A	Wetland Scrub	0.03	0.036	0.001
	642	E2EM1P	Saltmarsh	0.03	0.215	0.006
	Sub-total – Wetland 2				0.25	0.007
Wetland 3	612	E2SS3N	Mangroves	0.04	0.054	0.002
	615	PFO1P	Stream & Lake Swamp (Bottomland)	0.03	0.219	0.007
	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh	0.04	0.508	0.02
	Sub-total – Wetland 3				0.78	0.03
Wetland 4	642	E2EM1N	Saltmarsh (Shoreline)	0.03	0.063	0.002
	Sub-total – Wetland 4				0.06	0.002
Totals (rounded)					1.28	0.04

<sup>1</sup> FDOT, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Cowardin, *et al.*, 1979.

**Update 7:** Section 3.3, page 3-11. The second paragraph is revised as follows:

**Table 13** summarizes the wetland impacts and UMAM functional loss for each build alternative. A total of 4.34 acres of unavoidable wetland impacts for the Fort Hamer Alternative would require mitigation. As shown in Table 13, these 4.34 acres of wetland impacts would result in a UMAM functional loss of 1.60.

**Update 8:** Section 3.3, Table 13, page 3-12. Table 13 is revised as shown below.



**TABLE 13**  
**WETLAND IMPACTS AND UMAM FUNCTIONAL LOSS**

Wetland	Fill/Shade		Secondary		Total	
	Acres	Functional Loss	Acres	Functional Loss	Acres	Functional Loss
Fort Hamer Alternative						
Wetland 1	1.98	1.16	0.19	0.005	2.17	1.16
Wetland 2	0.24	0.07	0.25	0.007	0.49	0.08
Wetland 3	0.81	0.32	0.78	0.03	1.59	0.34
Wetland 4	0.03	0.01	0.06	0.002	0.09	0.01
Totals (rounded)	3.06	1.56	1.28	0.04	4.34	1.60
Rye Road Alternative						
Wetland 5	0.06	0.01	No Secondary Impacts for Rye Road Alternative		0.06	0.01
Wetland 6	0.19	0.08			0.19	0.08
Wetland 7	0.03	0.01			0.03	0.01
Wetland 8	0.08	0.02			0.08	0.02
Wetland 9	0.07	0.02			0.07	0.02
Wetland 10	0.61	0.43			0.61	0.43
Wetland 11	0.20	0.06			0.20	0.06
Wetland 12	0.40	0.12			0.40	0.12
Wetland 13	0.22	0.06			0.21	0.06
Wetland 14	0.14	0.09			0.14	0.09
Wetland 15	0.52	0.38			0.52	0.38
Totals (rounded)	2.52	1.28			2.52	1.28

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding.

**Update 9:** Section 4.5, page 4-4. The first paragraph of Section 4.5 is revised as follows:

As described previously, Wetlands 2, 3, 4, and River 1 (Manatee River) within the Fort Hamer Alternative qualify as EFH. As shown in **Table 15**, the Fort Hamer Alternative would impact 0.15 acre of EFH due to fill and 1.01 acres of EFH due to shading. The Rye Road Alternative would not affect habitats designated as EFH.

**Update 10:** Section 4.5.1, pages 4-4 and 4-5. This section is revised as follows:

#### **4.5.1 FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE**

The presence of bridge pilings/footings within the wetlands and open water portion of the Manatee River would result in 0.15 acre of fill. These impacts are not expected to adversely affect populations of red drum, gray snapper, pink shrimp, stone crab, and their prey populations.

A total of 1.01 acres of Wetlands 2, 3, and 4 would be subjected to permanent shading impacts from the bridge (all of which qualifies as designated EFH). These impacts would not affect the hydrology of the affected wetlands but would likely result in a decrease of vegetation beneath the bridge. As stated previously, approximately 48 percent of the structure would have a height-width ratio of 0.7, including that portion of the structure over the saltmarsh in Wetland 3. Because of the bridge height in this area and the north-south orientation of the bridge, the 1.01 acres of shading impacts are expected to have minimal adverse effects to red drum, gray snapper, pink shrimp, and stone crab populations and their prey species.

The temporary work trestle described previously would result in 0.62 acre of temporary shading impacts to wetlands. These impacts are expected to be minimal and should restore naturally following removal of the structure.

Water quality degradation could affect designated EFH within the Fort Hamer Alternative Study Area. To minimize potential water quality impacts, the project would be constructed in accordance with all permit conditions for maintaining water quality during construction and during operation of the facility. All stormwater runoff from the roadway and bridge structure would be directed to stormwater treatment ponds; no stormwater runoff would be directly discharged to the Manatee River or adjacent wetlands. For these reasons, no water quality induced adverse impacts to EFH or EFH-dependent species are anticipated for the Fort Hamer Alternative.



## Pride, Tom

---

**From:** Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil on behalf of Overton, Randall D CIV  
<Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 09, 2013 9:34 AM  
**To:** Peate, Martin; Pride, Tom  
**Subject:** FW: NMFS comments on the Fort Hamer Road Bridge DEIS (Docket # USCG -2010-0455)  
**Attachments:** Ft Hamer Rd Bridge\_NMFS Proposed Alternative Alignments.docx; NMFS response to Ft Hamer Bridge 2013 DEIS.docx

Please take a look at the NMFS commits attached and below. The issue concerning alignment was raised by NMFS in the past; we should take a closer look and discuss

---

**From:** david.rydene@noaa.gov [mailto:david.rydene@noaa.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 08, 2013 12:14 PM  
**To:** Overton, Randall D CIV  
**Subject:** NMFS comments on the Fort Hamer Road Bridge DEIS (Docket # USCG -2010-0455)

Hi Randy,

The two attached documents represent NMFS comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement regarding the proposed new Fort Hamer Road Bridge crossing the Manatee River in Manatee County, Florida. I can provide the comments in a letter format if you prefer.

I had a couple of editorial comments that are not included in our response. In "Section 1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION", the first sentence reads "The purpose of this Proposed Action **it** to provide...", but it should be "The purpose of this Proposed Action **is** to provide...".

Also, they use both the terms "secondary impacts" and "indirect impacts" in the document. They should probably just stick with "indirect impacts" throughout the document.

Give me a call or email if you have any questions.

Thanks, Dave

--

David Rydene, Ph.D.  
Fish Biologist  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Habitat Conservation Division  
263 13th Avenue South  
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Office (727) 824-5379  
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**NMFS response to 2013 Fort Hamer Bridge DEIS (Docket Number USCG-2010-0455)**

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) staff has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published on July 5, 2013, for the proposed new bridge crossing the Manatee River in the vicinity of Fort Hamer Road in Manatee County, Florida. NMFS offers the following comments on the DEIS.

Cited studies (i.e. the Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization's Long Range Transportation Needs Plan) indicate that a total of 28 lanes crossing the Manatee River will be needed to meet the area's transportation needs by 2035. At present only 16 lanes cross the river and the addition of the proposed bridge would only bring the total number of lanes to 18. This will only marginally improve the envisioned 2035 traffic situation. Another 10 lanes crossing the river would be needed to meet the predicted 2035 traffic needs, as either the construction of new bridges or the widening of existing bridges. The DEIS states that even if the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge is built, two more lanes east of I-75 will be needed by 2035 (Section 1.2.1). The DEIS does not indicate whether these two additional lanes would be added to the Rye Road Bridge or the Fort Hamer Bridge.

NMFS continues to believe that impacts to the salt marsh/mangrove peninsula are avoidable, and that the Fort Hamer Alternative, as proposed, does not represent the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative. In addition, if the bridge (as proposed) is built and then widened at some point in the future, even further impacts to these important estuarine wetlands would result. NMFS proposes two slightly different alignments that would avoid direct impacts to the salt marsh/mangrove peninsula (see attached document).

NMFS recommends that an Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation on smalltooth sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*) be conducted. This listed species has the potential to occur in the project area. The use of smalltooth sawfish construction conditions should be required during construction activities. A section on this smalltooth sawfish should be added to the Biological Assessment portion of the DEIS.

The bridge should be designed to convey all stormwater off the bridge and into appropriate stormwater treatment systems. This will prevent degraded water from being discharged into the Manatee River and reaching estuarine habitats at the project site and downstream. A commitment to convey stormwater off the bridge for treatment at upland facilities is made in Section 4.3.7 of the DEIS.

Before mitigation is finalized and permits are issued, a better effort must be made to quantify the amount of mangroves that are interspersed within those areas identified now (in the DEIS Wetland Evaluation Report) as simply salt marshes (FLUCFCS code 642). These mixed salt marsh/mangrove areas are found on both the peninsular area and on the southern shore of the river where the bridge would make landfall.

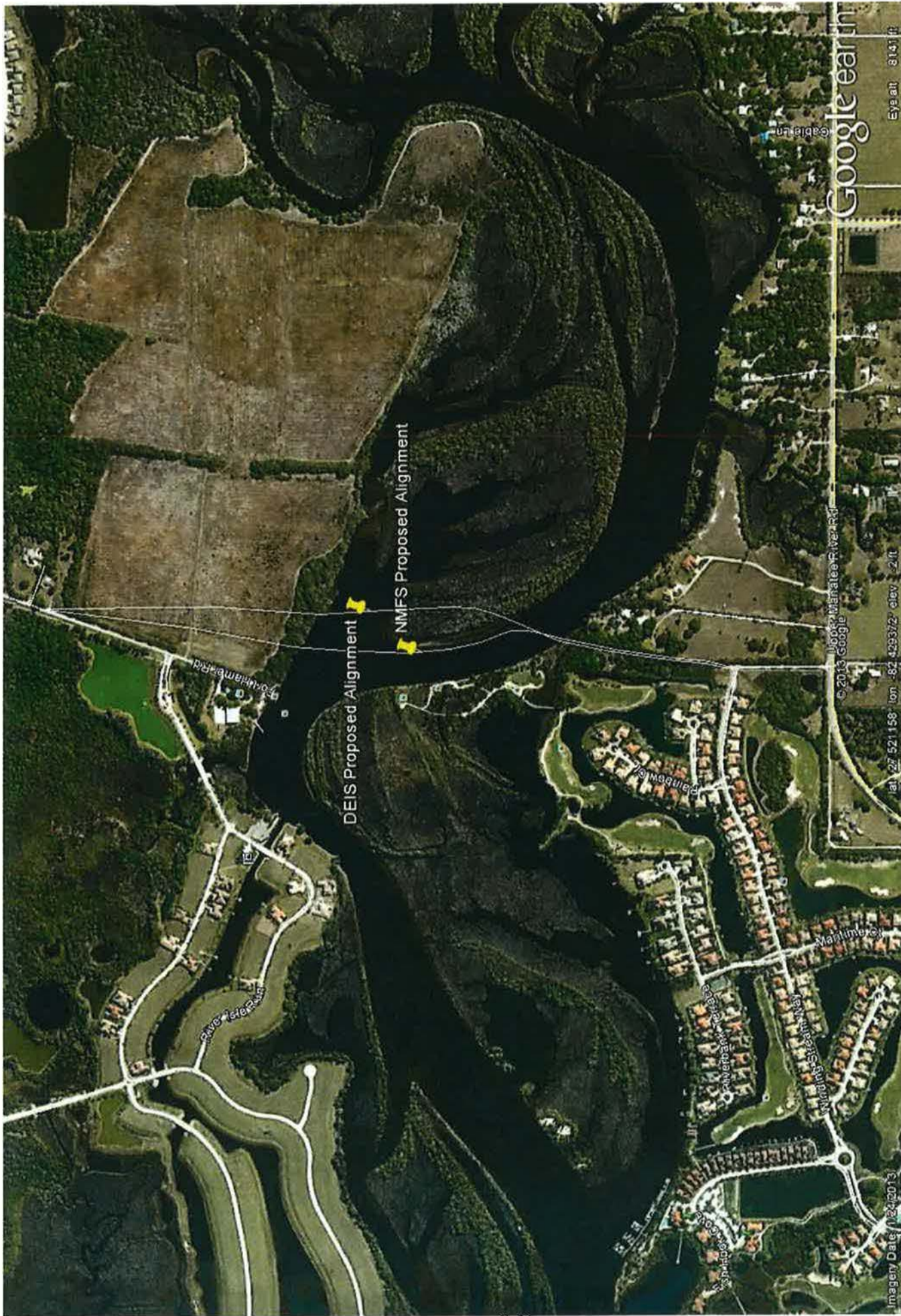
Although some wetland impacts will be temporary (e.g. from the work trestle) and these wetlands may recover after some period of time, the loss of ecological function during this recovery period should be factored into the compensatory mitigation scheme as a time lag metric. A thorough review of the UMAM scores and proposed compensatory mitigation should be conducted with all involved resource



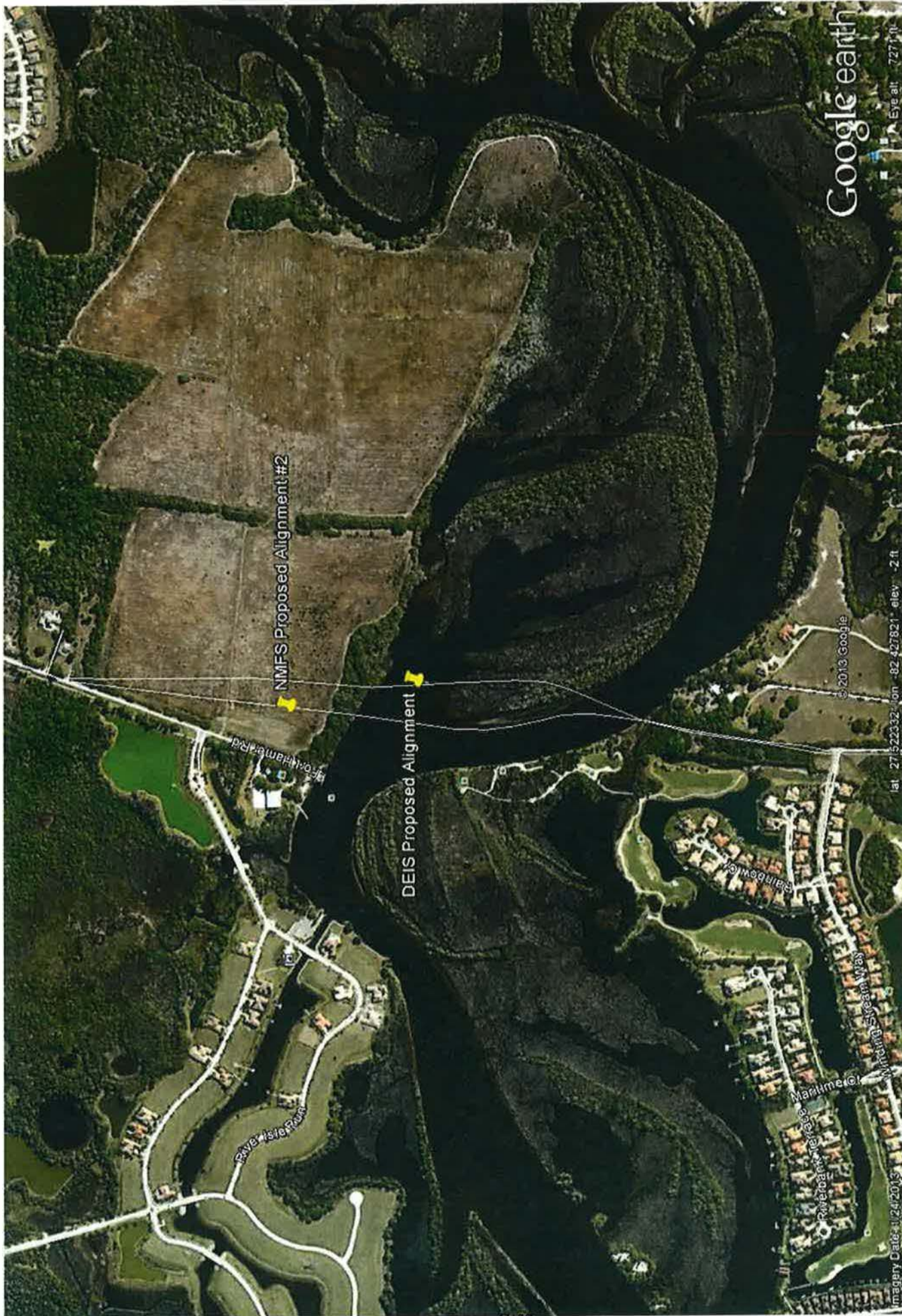
and permitting agencies in an effort to reach consensus on the final scores and compensatory mitigation scenario.

A statement is made in Section 4.5.1 of the Essential Fish Habitat portion of the Wetland Evaluation Report (Appendix D) that the project will result in "*de minimus* to minimal adverse impacts to red drum, gray snapper, pink shrimp, and stone crab populations and their prey species." with no explanation of how the conclusion was reached. Some explanation of the analysis used to reach the conclusion should be provided.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the DEIS and provide comments related to NMFS trust resources.









## Pride, Tom

---

**From:** David Rydene - NOAA Federal <david.rydene@noaa.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 27, 2013 2:21 PM  
**To:** Overton, Randall D CIV  
**Cc:** Pride, Tom  
**Subject:** Re: NMFS comments on the Fort Hamer Road Bridge DEIS (Docket # USCG -2010-0455)

Hi Randy,

I need an estimate of how the long the overall bridge construction should take, and how long the in-water pile driving should take.

Thanks, Dave

On Thu, Aug 22, 2013 at 1:42 PM, Overton, Randall D CIV <[Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil](mailto:Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil)> wrote:

Dave,

Here's what I got from the project consultants:

The installation of bridge pilings with hydraulic hammers (i.e., pile-driving) can generate acoustic vibrations within the water column. Although detailed construction methodologies for the Fort Hamer Alternative have not been developed, it is likely that many, if not all, of the bridge support pilings would be driven with a hydraulic hammer. A total of 54 24-in<sup>2</sup> pre-stressed concrete pilings will be installed in the river channel, and an additional 137 24-in<sup>2</sup> concrete pilings will be installed in the adjacent wetlands and shallow embayment between Wetland 3 and Wetland 4 (part of River 1).

Thanks,

Randy

---

**From:** [david.rydene@noaa.gov](mailto:david.rydene@noaa.gov) [mailto:[david.rydene@noaa.gov](mailto:david.rydene@noaa.gov)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 22, 2013 1:21 PM

**To:** Overton, Randall D CIV  
**Subject:** Re: NMFS comments on the Fort Hamer Road Bridge DEIS (Docket # USCG -2010-0455)

Hi Randy,



Do you have any information on the Ft. Hamer bridge's design details in terms of the anticipated number of piles that will be driven, size and type of piles (e.g. Bridge Engineering Report), or would someone with Manatee County or their consultants have something along those lines ?

Thanks, Dave

On Tue, Aug 13, 2013 at 10:45 AM, Overton, Randall D CIV <[Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil](mailto:Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil)> wrote:

Dave,  
Thank you for your input on the DEIS. We are working with the consultant to address all your concerns and comments. Additionally I submitted a consultation request for section 7 of ESA and EFH under MSFCA via the NMFS SERO website. Have you seen the consultation request?

Thanks again,  
Randy

-----Original Message-----

From: [david.rydene@noaa.gov](mailto:david.rydene@noaa.gov) [mailto:[david.rydene@noaa.gov](mailto:david.rydene@noaa.gov)]

Sent: Thursday, August 08, 2013 12:14 PM

To: Overton, Randall D CIV

Subject: NMFS comments on the Fort Hamer Road Bridge DEIS (Docket # USCG -2010-0455)

Hi Randy,

The two attached documents represent NMFS comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement regarding the proposed new Fort Hamer Road Bridge crossing the Manatee River in Manatee County, Florida. I can provide the comments in a letter format if you prefer.

I had a couple of editorial comments that are not included in our response. In "Section 1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION", the first sentence reads "The purpose of this Proposed Action is to provide...", but it should be "The purpose of this Proposed Action is to provide...".

Also, they use both the terms "secondary impacts" and "indirect impacts" in the document. They should probably just stick with "indirect impacts" throughout the document.

Give me a call or email if you have any questions.

Thanks, Dave

--

David Rydene, Ph.D.  
Fish Biologist  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Habitat Conservation Division

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Fax (727) 824-5300



**Pride, Tom**

---

**From:** Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil on behalf of Overton, Randall D CIV  
<Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 29, 2013 1:25 PM  
**To:** david.rydene@noaa.gov  
**Cc:** Pride, Tom  
**Subject:** RE: NMFS comments on the Fort Hamer Road Bridge DEIS (Docket # USCG -2010-0455)

Dave,  
I will send a new consultation letter and included the smalltooth sawfish. I will also get the pile driving information for the temporary work trestle and incorporate the information into the new letter.

Thanks,  
Randy

---

**From:** [david.rydene@noaa.gov](mailto:david.rydene@noaa.gov) [<mailto:david.rydene@noaa.gov>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 29, 2013 11:52 AM  
**To:** Overton, Randall D CIV  
**Subject:** Re: NMFS comments on the Fort Hamer Road Bridge DEIS (Docket # USCG -2010-0455)

Hi Randy,

I was looking at the USCG Section 7 consultation request letter again today and noticed that it does not include a determination or request for smalltooth sawfish consultation. Could you send a modified letter or addendum ?

Also, I will need pile driving information for the temporary work trestle, as was provided for the actual bridge pile driving.

Thanks, Dave

On Thu, Aug 22, 2013 at 1:42 PM, Overton, Randall D CIV <[Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil](mailto:Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil)> wrote:

Dave,

Here's what I got from the project consultants:

The installation of bridge pilings with hydraulic hammers (i.e., pile-driving) can generate acoustic vibrations within the water column. Although detailed construction methodologies for the Fort Hamer Alternative have not been developed, it is likely that many, if not all, of the bridge support pilings would be driven with a hydraulic hammer. A total of 54 24-in<sup>2</sup> pre-stressed concrete pilings will be installed in the river channel, and an additional 137 24-in<sup>2</sup> concrete pilings will be installed in the adjacent wetlands and shallow embayment between Wetland 3 and Wetland 4 (part of River 1).

Thanks,

## Pride, Tom

---

**From:** Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil on behalf of Overton, Randall D CIV  
<Randall.D.Overton@uscg.mil>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 09, 2013 10:13 AM  
**To:** Pride, Tom  
**Cc:** Peate, Martin  
**Subject:** FW: Consultation letter for Ft. Hamer and response to NMFS Comments to DEIS  
**Attachments:** NMFS ESA Section 7and EFHrevisedconsultation request - SEP2013.pdf; Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Construction Conditions.pdf

This is the email that transmitted the revised NMFS consultation letter

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Overton, Randall D CIV  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 18, 2013 2:58 PM  
**To:** 'david.rydene@noaa.gov'  
**Subject:** Consultation letter for Ft. Hamer and response to NMFS Comments to DEIS

Dave,

I have attached a revised consultation letter for the Ft Hamer project.

Included in the attached letter is consultation request for the smalltooth sawfish, as requested. I've learned a lot about the smalltooth sawfish from this project and research after our discussion.

Also included as an attachment to the letter is a response to your comments to the DEIS for the project.

Please let me know if I can provide anything else.

Thank you,

Randall Overton  
Federal Permit Agent USCG  
909 SE 1st Ave Suite 432  
Miami, FL 33131  
(305) 205-0795 Cell  
(305) 415-6736 Office



U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander  
Seventh Coast Guard District

909 S. E. First Avenue (Rm 432)  
Miami, FL 33131  
Staff Symbol: (dpb)  
Phone: (305) 415-6736  
Fax: (305) 415-6763  
Email: randall.d.overtont@uscg.mil

16450  
September 18, 2013

David Rydene, Ph.D.  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Southeast Regional Office  
263 13th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701-5505

Dear Dr. Rydene,

On July 24, 2013, the U.S. Coast Guard requested initiation of consultation in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and to initiate consultation under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) for Essential Fish Habitat for the proposed new bridge over the Manatee River in Manatee County, Florida. Project related documents made available to the NMFS included the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), Wetlands Evaluation Report (WER) and subsequent update, and Biological Assessment (BA) and subsequent update.

On August 8, 2013, your office provided comments on the above-referenced documents and requested additional information for NMFS' review. Attachment A to this letter contains a copy of your comments and responses to those comments as prepared by the project consultant.

Comment No. 3 of the NMFS comments recommends that an ESA Section 7 consultation on smalltooth sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*) be conducted as the species has the potential to occur in the project area. Also, in an email dated August 29, 2013 the NMFS requested a modified consultation request that addresses the smalltooth sawfish. Through this letter the Coast Guard requests initiation of ESA Section 7 consultation for the smalltooth sawfish. We have included the following information regarding the smalltooth sawfish to facilitate your review of the project and to further the consultation process. This same information is being incorporated into the revised BA which will be included in the Final EIS.

**Smalltooth Sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*):**

*ESA Endangered [U.S. - Distinct Population Segment (DPS) listed April 1, 2003]*

Smalltooth sawfish inhabit shallow coastal waters of tropical seas and estuaries throughout the world. They are usually found in shallow waters (less than 32 ft (10 m)), very close to shore over muddy and sandy bottoms. They are often found in sheltered bays, on shallow banks, and in estuaries or river mouths. They prefer warmer water temperature of 22-28 degrees Celsius. They are known to ascend inland in river systems, and have been shown to have a salinity preference of 18-24 parts per thousand. In September 2009 NMFS issued a Final Rule (74 FR 45353) to designate critical habitat for the U.S. distinct population segment (DPS) of smalltooth sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*). The critical habitat consists of two units: the Charlotte Harbor

Estuary Unit, which comprises approximately 221,459 acres of coastal habitat; and the Ten Thousand Islands/Everglades Unit (TTI/E), which comprises approximately 619,013 acres of coastal habitat. The two units are located along the southwestern coast of Florida between Charlotte Harbor and Florida Bay (*NMFS OPR website*). Neither the Fort Hamer Alternative nor the Rye Road Alternative occurs within the vicinity of designated critical habitat for the smalltooth sawfish.

Potentially suitable habitat for the smalltooth sawfish occurs along the sandy bottom of the Manatee River within the Fort Hamer Alternative. No smalltooth sawfish have been documented in the Manatee River by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) and none were observed during field reviews for the project. Potential threats to the smalltooth sawfish as a result of implementation of the Fort Hamer Alternative include collision with construction vessels and entanglement in lines and floating turbidity barriers.

Due to the very shallow depths and narrow confines of the river at the Rye Road Alternative, potentially suitable habitat for the smalltooth sawfish is considered non-existent within the Rye Road Alternative. As a result, the Coast Guard has determined that implementation of the Rye Road Alternative will have no effect on the smalltooth sawfish.

**Other species under NMFS purview (Sea turtles, Shortnose and Gulf sturgeon, North Atlantic right whales and other whales, Johnson seagrass, Elkhorn and Staghorn Coral):** The Coast Guard has made a No-Effect determination for the above-listed species because the project is being proposed outside the known range and habitat of these species. A note will be made to the project files documenting the no-effect determination.

### **Proposed Avoidance, Minimization, Mitigation Measures:**

To minimize potential impacts and interaction with the smalltooth sawfish the applicant (Manatee County) has committed to the implementation of standard NMFS (SERO) approved Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Construction Conditions (Revised: March 23, 2006). – Attached to transmittal email.

### **Summary of Coast Guard Determinations:**

Based on the information and commitments contained in this consultation letter, the BA and WER, including the supplemental updates, the Coast Guard determines:

The LPA (Fort Hamer Bridge Alternative) May Affect, but is not Likely to Adversely Affect (MANLAA) the smalltooth sawfish.

### **Additional Information Regarding Proposed Construction Methodology and Potential Impacts:**



16450

18 September 2013

In emails dated August 27 and 29, 2013 the NMFS requested additional information regarding the length of work and the temporary work trestle. The following information is provided in response to these requests.

It is anticipated that construction of the proposed bridge for the Fort Hamer Alternative will take a total of twenty (20) months, including approximately six (6) months of in-water work for pile-driving and construction of the pile caps.

The design of the temporary work trestle is dependent upon contractor needs and will be finalized following selection of the construction contractor. However, for such work platforms contractors typically use steel pipe piles, 18 to 24 inches in diameter, driven in place with a hydraulic hammer. Based on the consultant's preliminary layout of the temporary work trestle, approximately 136 steel piles would be needed to support the structure. It is expected that the temporary structure would remain in place for 14 to 18 months during construction of the bridge.

Sincerely,



RANDALL D. OVERTON  
Bridge Management Specialist  
U.S. Coast Guard

Enclosure: 1) Attachment A – Responses to NMFS comments dated August 8, 2013  
2) Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Construction Conditions (Revised: March 23, 2006) as an email attachment

Copy: CGHQ-BRG-2 as an email

# ATTACHMENT A

## NMFS response to 2013 Fort Hamer Bridge DEIS (Docket Number USCG-2010-0455)

*Transmitted via email on 8 August 2013 by David Rydene (NMFS) to Randy Overton (USCG)*

URS responses to NMFS comments are shown in **Bold**.

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) staff has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) published on July 5, 2013, for the proposed new bridge crossing the Manatee River in the vicinity of Fort Hamer Road in Manatee County, Florida. NMFS offers the following comments on the DEIS.

Comment No. 1: Cited studies (i.e. the Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization's Long Range Transportation Needs Plan) indicate that a total of 28 lanes crossing the Manatee River will be needed to meet the area's transportation needs by 2035. At present only 16 lanes cross the river and the addition of the proposed bridge would only bring the total number of lanes to 18. This will only marginally improve the envisioned 2035 traffic situation. Another 10 lanes crossing the river would be needed to meet the predicted 2035 traffic needs, as either the construction of new bridges or the widening of existing bridges. The DEIS states that even if the proposed Fort Hamer Bridge is built, two more lanes east of I-75 will be needed by 2035 (Section 1.2.1). The DEIS does not indicate whether these two additional lanes would be added to the Rye Road Bridge or the Fort Hamer Bridge.

**Response:** At this time it is unknown where additional lanes would be added in the future. The current project is funded solely by Manatee County and the County currently does not have additional lanes funded. Likewise, the FDOT currently has no plans to add additional lanes east of I-75. The addition of any lanes across the river following construction of the Fort Hamer Alternative would require additional studies and documentation in accordance with NEPA.

Comment No. 2: NMFS continues to believe that impacts to the salt marsh/mangrove peninsula are avoidable, and that the Fort Hamer Alternative, as proposed, does not represent the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative. In addition, if the bridge (as proposed) is built and then widened at some point in the future, even further impacts to these important estuarine wetlands would result. NMFS proposes two slightly different alignments that would avoid direct impacts to the salt marsh/mangrove peninsula (see attached document).

**Response:** With any design it is best to have the bridge as perpendicular to the river as possible for several reasons:

1. There are fewer piers in the water which provides a better "line-of-sight" between piers for the boaters;
2. In consideration of line-of-sight, currents, and wind, it is easier and safer to navigate between piers that are arranged perpendicular to the river, thus providing a safer condition for boaters;
3. With fewer piers there will be less scour and degradation of the river bottom;
4. A greater number of piers is more likely to result in a tailwater condition, i.e., upstream flooding due to greater restriction;



5. The channel span length is shorter, which provides for a more economical bridge;
6. The vertical profile is lower due to a shallower superstructure depth;
7. Long-term maintenance costs are reduced due to simpler geometrics and materials.

The alignments suggested by NMFS will require a longer channel span due to the heavy skew at the centerline of river in order to provide the USCG minimum 75-foot horizontal clearance. The channel span length will increase from approximately 145 feet to 260 feet. Longer and heavier beams at large skews are much more complicated and difficult to erect. These longer lengths will require steel to be used for the beams which requires constant maintenance painting due to the close proximity of the brackish water. The increase in bridge costs for the NMFS alignment will be approximately \$6 million dollars. In addition there will be approximately twice as many piers in the water compared to the Fort Hamer alignment shown in the DEIS. Although not currently planned, if the bridge is ever widened to four lanes, it will effectively obstruct one third of the river width for a length of almost one thousand feet. Finally, a relatively sharp curve on the bridge as suggested by the NMFS proposed alignment would introduce additional safety concerns for bridge users and would require substantial vehicle speed restrictions. As a result of these considerations, alternative bridge alignments are not considered practicable.

Comment No. 3: NMFS recommends that an Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation on smalltooth sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*) be conducted. This listed species has the potential to occur in the project area. The use of smalltooth sawfish construction conditions should required during construction activities. A section on this smalltooth sawfish should be added to the Biological Assessment portion of the DEIS.

**Response:** We have conducted an evaluation of the potential project effects on the smalltooth sawfish. The Coast Guard is submitting this information to the NMFS along with a request for ESA Section 7 consultation on the species. The use of NMFS' Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Construction Conditions during construction will be a commitment in the Final EIS.

Comment No. 4: The bridge should be designed to convey all stormwater off the bridge and into appropriate stormwater treatment systems. This will prevent degraded water from being discharged into the Manatee River and reaching estuarine habitats at the project site and downstream. A commitment to convey stormwater off the bridge for treatment at upland facilities is made in Section 4.3.7 of the DEIS.

**Response:** The stormwater conveyance system has been designed to capture and treat all stormwater from the bridge. No water will be discharged from the bridge to the Manatee River.

Comment No. 5: Before mitigation is finalized and permits are issued, a better effort must be made to quantify the amount of mangroves that are interspersed within those areas identified now (in the DEIS Wetland Evaluation Report) as simply salt marshes (FLUCFCS code 642). These mixed salt marsh/mangrove areas are found on both the peninsular area and on the southern shore of the river where the bridge would make landfall.

**Response:** We have revisited the project area in an effort to further quantify the extent of mangroves in these areas. Within Wetland 2 both red and black mangroves occur within the 0.59-acre area identified as wetland scrub. The mangroves occur sporadically in this area and are interspersed with

salt bush, wax myrtle, and Brazilian pepper. The total area occupied by mangroves within this area is estimated at 0.1 acre.

The saltmarsh portion of the peninsula north of the river contains very widely scattered red mangrove trees with most being less than three feet tall. Of the 1.58 acres of saltmarsh identified in this area, less than 200 square feet is estimated to consist of mangroves.

Comment No. 6: Although some wetland impacts will be temporary (e.g. from the work trestle) and these wetlands may recover after some period of time, the loss of ecological function during this recovery period should be factored into the compensatory mitigation scheme as a time lag metric. A thorough review of the UMAM scores and proposed compensatory mitigation should be conducted with all involved resource and permitting agencies in an effort to reach consensus on the final scores and compensatory mitigation scenario.

**Response:** We will factor a time lag into the UMAM scoring for the temporary wetland impacts. Application has been made for environmental permits from the SWFWMD and USACE; both of these agencies are reviewing the UMAM scoring for the proposed impact and mitigation areas and the acceptability of the proposed mitigation.

Comment No. 7: A statement is made in Section 4.5.1 of the Essential Fish Habitat portion of the Wetland Evaluation Report (Appendix D) that the project will result in "*de minimus* to minimal adverse impacts to red drum, gray snapper, pink shrimp, and stone crab populations and their prey species." with no explanation of how the conclusion was reached. Some explanation of the analysis used to reach the conclusion should be provided.

**Response:** The first paragraph of Section 4.5.1 is being revised as follows and as an explanation of the analysis used to reach the conclusion referenced above:

#### **4.5.1 FORT HAMER ALTERNATIVE**

*The presence of bridge pilings/footings within the wetlands and open water portion of the Manatee River would result in 0.15 acre of fill. These impacts are not expected to adversely affect populations of red drum, gray snapper, pink shrimp, stone crab, and their prey populations.*

*A total of 1.01 acres of Wetlands 2, 3, and 4 would be subjected to permanent shading impacts from the bridge (all of which qualifies as designated EFH). These impacts would not affect the hydrology of the affected wetlands but may result in a decrease of vegetation and secondary productivity beneath the bridge. As stated previously, approximately 48 percent of the structure would have a height-width ratio of 0.7 or greater, including that portion of the structure over the saltmarsh and mangroves in Wetland 3. The mid-point of the bridge, and consequently the highest part of the bridge, occurs over these marsh/mangrove habitats and allows stormwater to flow in equal volumes from the bridge to the stormwater ponds located at each end of the structure. Thus, 75 percent of the total permanent shading area (0.76 acre of the 1.01 acres) occurs beneath that portion of the bridge with a height-width ratio of 0.7 or greater. The remaining 25 percent of shading area (0.25 acre) occurs beneath portions of the bridge with a height-width ratio of less than 0.7.*

*Broome et al. (2005) report that above-ground biomass, stem height, stem count, number of flowers, and basal area were greatly reduced beneath bridges at height-width ratios less than 0.5. At a height-width ratio of 0.68 adverse bridge shading effects on vegetation were still detected although greatly*



*diminished. Likewise, they showed a strong correlation of bridge height-width ratio with secondary productivity with benthic invertebrate density and diversity significantly lower beneath bridges with a height-width ratio less than 0.7. Broome et al. (2005) concluded, "Data indicates that shading by bridges having height-width ratios greater than 0.7 do not adversely impact the productivity or function of the underlying marsh..." Based on this analysis, the 0.25 acre of permanent shading area beneath the proposed bridge would be expected to result in reduced productivity and ecological function beneath the bridge. The remaining 0.76 acre of shading would have minimally reduced productivity and function. Shading beneath the bridge may be further reduced due to the north-south orientation of the bridge; more sunlight will be present under the bridge during the morning and late afternoon hours compared to a bridge with an east-west axis. Based on this information, we conclude that the 1.01 acres of permanent shading beneath the bridge will have minimal adverse effects to red drum, gray snapper, pink shrimp, and stone crab populations and their prey species.*



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
**NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE**  
Southeast Regional Office  
263 13th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

### **SEA TURTLE AND SMALLTOOTH SAWFISH CONSTRUCTION CONDITIONS**

The permittee shall comply with the following protected species construction conditions:

- a. The permittee shall instruct all personnel associated with the project of the potential presence of these species and the need to avoid collisions with sea turtles and smalltooth sawfish. All construction personnel are responsible for observing water-related activities for the presence of these species.
- b. The permittee shall advise all construction personnel that there are civil and criminal penalties for harming, harassing, or killing sea turtles or smalltooth sawfish, which are protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.
- c. Siltation barriers shall be made of material in which a sea turtle or smalltooth sawfish cannot become entangled, be properly secured, and be regularly monitored to avoid protected species entrapment. Barriers may not block sea turtle or smalltooth sawfish entry to or exit from designated critical habitat without prior agreement from the National Marine Fisheries Service's Protected Resources Division, St. Petersburg, Florida.
- d. All vessels associated with the construction project shall operate at "no wake/idle" speeds at all times while in the construction area and while in water depths where the draft of the vessel provides less than a four-foot clearance from the bottom. All vessels will preferentially follow deep-water routes (e.g., marked channels) whenever possible.
- e. If a sea turtle or smalltooth sawfish is seen within 100 yards of the active daily construction/dredging operation or vessel movement, all appropriate precautions shall be implemented to ensure its protection. These precautions shall include cessation of operation of any moving equipment closer than 50 feet of a sea turtle or smalltooth sawfish. Operation of any mechanical construction equipment shall cease immediately if a sea turtle or smalltooth sawfish is seen within a 50-ft radius of the equipment. Activities may not resume until the protected species has departed the project area of its own volition.
- f. Any collision with and/or injury to a sea turtle or smalltooth sawfish shall be reported immediately to the National Marine Fisheries Service's Protected Resources Division (727-824-5312) and the local authorized sea turtle stranding/rescue organization.
- g. Any special construction conditions, required of your specific project, outside these general conditions, if applicable, will be addressed in the primary consultation.

Revised: March 23, 2006

O:\forms\Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Construction Conditions.doc





## Pride, Tom

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**From:** David Rydene - NOAA Federal <david.rydene@noaa.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 09, 2013 10:04 AM  
**To:** Pride, Tom  
**Subject:** Re: Bridge over Manatee River at Ft Hamer - additional NMFS questions

Thanks Tom !

On Wed, Oct 9, 2013 at 7:52 AM, Pride, Tom <[tom.pride@urs.com](mailto:tom.pride@urs.com)> wrote:

David,

On October 2 you had called and asked for clarifying information regarding the temporary trestle and pile-driving associated with the proposed bridge over the Manatee River at Fort Hamer. Each question is listed below followed by our response:

- What is the length of the temporary trestle on the south side of the river and the length of the temporary trestle on the north side of the river? **Response: The south side trestle is approximately 270 feet and the north side trestle is approximately 1,650 feet.**
  
- Other than the pilings/piers are there any other structures or rip-rap to be placed in the river or wetlands adjacent to the river? **Response: There are no other structures planned in the river. At the end bents, the Preliminary Bridge Hydraulic Report recommends sod or equivalent geotextile/armoring for the slope at the wetland/upland interface. The current design does not include any rip-rap or other armoring below the wetland boundary. If, during construction, it is determined that riprap armoring is required below the wetland boundary a permit modification for the additional impact and required mitigation will be submitted.**
  
- How long (approximately) will it take to drive each concrete pile for the main bridge and how long will it take to drive each pipe pile for the temporary trestle? How many of each can be driven each day? **Response: It varies throughout Florida depending on the soil conditions and hammer used by the contractor. Concrete piles can be driven in as quickly as 15 minutes or as long as 45-90 minutes. Assuming 60 minutes per pile, approximately 6 to 8 concrete piles could be driven in one day. The steel pipe piles are vibrated in place and take between 15 and 45 minutes each. Assuming 30 minutes for each pile, approximately 14 to 16 steel pipe piles can be driven per day.**

- Is there a potential for the contractor to use water jetting to start the piles? **Response: The Geotechnical Report recommends preformed pile holes to start the piles, but there is always the potential that the contractor may want to use water jetting to start the piles.**

I hope this information is helpful for your review. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or if you need additional information.

Thank you,

Tom Pride

Manager, Environmental Sciences

URS Corporation

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Direct: 813-636-2154

Cell: 813-748-7315

Tom.pride@urs.com

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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
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(727) 824-5317; FAX 824-5300

December 16, 2013 F/SER46:DR

Office of the Commander (dpb)  
Seventh Coast Guard District  
Brickell Plaza Federal Building  
909 Southeast First Avenue (Room 432)  
Miami, Florida 33131-3028

Dear Commander:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, Habitat Conservation Division (NMFS), has reviewed the documents (Public Notice 11-13, Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and supplemental updates to the Biological Assessment and Wetland Evaluation Report) provided by the United States Coast Guard regarding the construction of a new bridge spanning the Manatee River in Manatee County, Florida.

The proposed new bridge project site is located at 27.522423°N, 82.428585°W over the Manatee River in Manatee County, Florida. This portion of the Manatee River is tidally influenced and salt marsh and mangroves are present within the limits of proposed construction. Some submerged aquatic vegetation (widgeon grass, *Ruppia maritima*), a salt-tolerant freshwater species, also occurs in the area. There is currently no bridge structure at the site. Manatee County (the applicant) proposes the construction of a new two-lane bridge. The northern end of the bridge would connect with existing Fort Hamer Road, and the southern end would tie into Upper Manatee Road/Lakewood Ranch Boulevard. The project length would be approximately 2,318 feet. At its highest point the bridge would be 26 feet above Mean High Water. The project is expected to take 20 months to complete.

Construction of the bridge is expected to result in permanent and temporary impacts to salt marsh and mangrove habitats. These habitats are utilized by federally-managed fish species and their prey, and are considered Essential Fish Habitat under Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Permanent loss of salt marsh due to the project is estimated at 1.48 acres and permanent loss of mangroves is estimated at 0.11 acres. Temporary impacts to salt marsh due to the installation of two temporary work trestles is estimated at 0.62 acres. The work trestles will be in place for 14-18 months.

NMFS staff has reviewed the Conceptual Mitigation Plan contained in Appendix D (Wetland Evaluation Report) of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Compensatory mitigation to offset wetland impacts will be undertaken in the vicinity of the project and involve wetland creation efforts.

NMFS believes that the proposed compensatory mitigation for salt marsh and mangrove impacts due to the project will be adequate to offset the loss of ecological function provided by these habitats. The final compensatory mitigation plan should include a monitoring component to ensure that the compensatory mitigation is successful. In the event that mitigation is not successful, a contingency



mitigation plan will need to be developed to offset the loss of ecological function and include a time lag factor to account for the time period that those lost functions have not been present.

If you have questions regarding our views on this project, please contact Dr. Dave Rydene in our St. Petersburg, Florida office. Dr. Rydene may be reached at the letterhead address or by calling (727) 824-5379.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Virginia M. Fay".

Virginia M. Fay  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
Habitat Conservation Division

cc:  
F/SER4  
F/SER46 - Rydene